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NO. 36
JUNE-JULY

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FROM THE

CRYPT

®

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

IN THIS ISSUE:
E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY
RAY BRADBURY
AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!



THE



"ARTIST OF THE ISSUE"

GEORGE EVANS



Latest permanent addition to the E.C. family, George R. Evans was born Feb. 5, 1920, in Harwood, Pa., of English and Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. When George was nine, his family moved to Kulpmont, Pa., a coal-mining town. George's early art training came at fifteen from a correspondence course, which he paid for by working as a store clerk, coal-trucker, and mill hand. He also attended the Scranton Art School for one year. At 16, he had already started to sell illustrations to airplane pulp magazines, supplementing his income by sign-painting. Came the war, and George spent three years in the AAF, where, by diligence, application, and K.P., he rose to the grade of Pfc. Decorations: one (1) Good Conduct Medal, grudgingly awarded. While in the army, George was stationed for a spell on Long Island. He liked it so much that upon being discharged, he came back there to live with his bride, whom he'd married six months previously. After returning to civilian life, George's first job was as a staff artist for another comic publishing house. He also attended night classes at the Art Students League in N. Y. C. George, his lovely wife Evelyn, and their four-year-old daughter, Carol, are now living in a cute little ranch house in Levittown, Long Island. His hobbies include: aviation . . . especially World War I vintage, loafing, sports of all kinds, loafing, eating, and . . . you guessed it . . . loafing! George's work . . . which has been enthusiastically received by you readers . . . appears in E.C.'s three horror mags, two war mags, and two SuspenseStory mags!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! WELCOME, BOILS AND GHOULS... WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR. THIS IS YOUR HORROR-HOST, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, INVITING YOU IN TO HEAR ANOTHER GHASTLY SELECTION FROM MY DISGUSTING COLLECTION. PERHAPS, BEFORE I START MY CHILLING TALE, YOU MIGHT LIKE TO PLAY A LITTLE GAME WITH ME? LIKE... SAY... OLD MAID? I HAVE A REAL LIVE OLD MAID! NO? OH... TOO BAD! THEN I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-CURDLING YARN I CALL...

**FARE TONIGHT,
FOLLOWED BY
INCREASING
CLOTTYNES...**



YOU SLAM DOWN THE TRUNK-LID OF YOUR TAXI-CAB AND LOOK AROUND. THE NIGHT IS DAMP AND A FAINT TRACE OF FOG DRIFTS IN FROM THE BAY, CHILLING YOU TO THE BONE. YOU STAND THERE FOR A MOMENT, SHIVERING. YOU FUMBLE IN YOUR JACKET POCKET FOR A CIGARETTE, PULL OUT A HALF EMPTY PACK AND SHAKE ONE BETWEEN YOUR LIPS. THE FLAME OF THE MATCH, FLARING UP IN THE GLOOM, BURNS YOUR EYES, AND EVEN AFTER YOU'VE BLOWN IT OUT, ITS GLOW STILL DANCES BEFORE YOU...

HMMPH... NICE NIGHT...
FOR A MURDER!



YOU SHUFFLE AROUND TO THE FRONT OF YOUR CAB, SWING OPEN THE DOOR, AND SETTLE INSIDE ON THE MOIST COLD LEATHER DRIVER'S SEAT. YOU SIT THERE FOR A MOMENT, SUCKING IN THE DRY SMOKE FROM YOUR BUTT AND SWALLOWING IT WHOLE INTO YOUR LUNGS THEN YOU START THE ENGINE...

THINK I'LL CRUISE THE WEST SIDE, TONIGHT!



THE FOG HAS SETTLED ITS BLANKET OF GREY MIST UPON YOUR WINDSHIELD, SO YOU SNAP ON THE WIPERS. INDUSTRIOUS LITTLE FINGERS WHIP BACK AND FORTH, SHAMING THE WATER AWAY. YOU PEER THROUGH THE CLEAR OPENING AT THE DISTORTED ASPHALT AHEAD. THE STREETS ARE DESERTED...

CRIPES! NOT A SOUL AROUND! WHAT A NIGHT TO TRY TO SCRAPE UP A FARE!



NOW IT HAS BEGUN TO RAIN. A SOFT DRIZZLE AT FIRST, THEN HEAVIER AND HEAVIER... THE WATER CASCAIDING BEFORE YOU... THE INDUSTRIOUS LITTLE WIPERS SCRAMBLING MADLY BACK AND FORTH... CLEARING IT AWAY, FIRST TO ONE SIDE... THEN THE OTHER.

WELL, THAT FINISHES IT! I'LL NEVER GET A FARE, NOW...



YOU CRUISE FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER, SEARCHING THE SIDEWALKS FOR A SIGNALING PASSERBY... A HOMEWARD-BOUND CUSTOMER... BUT YOU SEE NO ONE. YOU SHRUG AND PULL UP TO A DESERTED HACK STAND...

NO USE WASTING GAS. I'LL PARK HERE BY THE SUBWAY EXIT...



YOU SHUT OFF THE ENGINE AND SIT BACK, EXTRACTING ANOTHER BUTT FROM YOUR EMPTYING PACK. A ROAR BELOW TELLS YOU THAT A SUBWAY TRAIN HAS PULLED IN. A FEW SECONDS LATER, FIGURES POUR FROM THE SUBWAY EXIT...

TAXI? TAXI, LADY? TAXI?



THE SUBWAY RIDERS HURRY OFF INTO THE WET GLOOM. THE NEWSIE AT THE CORNER CALLS AFTER THEM, TRYING TO UNLOAD HIS NIGHT'S PAPER ORDER...

READ ALL ABOUT IT! ANOTHER BODY FOUND! ANOTHER MURDER! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

TAXI!! TAXI!!



THE RUSHING SHADOWS ARE GONE. THE NIGHT AND THE RAIN SETTLE DOWN AGAIN. YOU STARE ACROSS THE MIRRORED SIDEWALK TO THE NEWSTAND. ANOTHER MURDER. CURIOSITY GETS THE BETTER OF YOU. YOU SNAP OPEN THE CAB-DOOR AND DART THROUGH THE RAIN TO THE PROTECTION OF THE STAND'S OVERHANG...

PAPER, MISTER?

YEAH! THANKS!



YOU SETTLE BACK IN YOUR CAB ONCE MORE, LIGHT UP ANOTHER BUTT, AND OPEN THE PAPER. THE HEADLINES SCREAM AT YOU...

THE CORPSE OF A THIRTY YEAR OLD WOMAN WAS FOUND DRAINED OF ITS BLOOD LAST NIGHT. THIS IS THE THIRTEENTH VICTIM TO DATE...



ANOTHER MURDER. THIRTEEN OF THEM NOW. EACH BODY DRAINED OF ITS BLOOD. YOUR EYES SWEEP OVER THE COLUMNS OF TINY PRINT... THE GORY DETAILS. SUDDENLY, A PARAGRAPH CATCHES YOUR ATTENTION...

'A SUGGESTION THAT A VAMPIRE MIGHT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE MURDERS WAS OFFERED BY DR. EGBERT MULLER, NOTED MYTHOLOGIST. POLICE HAVE REFUTED THIS POSSIBILITY.'



YOU SHIVER. THE WORK OF A VAMPIRE. YOU LOOK AROUND UNCOMFORTABLY, PEERING OUT AT THE DOWNPOUR. THE RAIN POUNDS DOWN ON YOUR CAB-ROOF, CHATTERING LOUDLY...

A... A VAMPIRE! WHO WOULD BELIEVE IT?!



THE NIGHT SWIMS IN A TORRENT BEFORE YOUR EYES. THE DARKNESS MELTS FROM THE BLACKNESS ABOVE AND SPATTERS DOWN ON THE ENGINE HOOD... CASCADES DOWN THE WINDSHIELD IN SHEETS OF DANCING LIGHTS. SUDDENLY HE IS BESIDE YOU, HIS BLACK OVERCOAT COLLAR TURNED UP, COVERING THE LOWER PART OF HIS FACE... HIS BLACK HAT-BRIM TURNED DOWN, SHIELDING THE UPPER PART. ONLY HIS EYES GLARE LIKE FIRE-LIGHTS FROM THE RECESSES OF THEIR SOCKETS...

BUSY?

NOSIREE! HOP IN! WHERE TO?



HE MUTTERS THE STREET AND NUMBER AND SLIDES INTO THE BACK SEAT. HE CARRIES A BRIEFCASE, WHICH HE HOLDS ON HIS LAP. YOU MESH GEARS AND PULL AWAY, GRINNING. A CUSTOMER... AT LAST. YOU GLANCE AT HIM IN THE MIRROR...

ROTTEN WEATHER, EH?

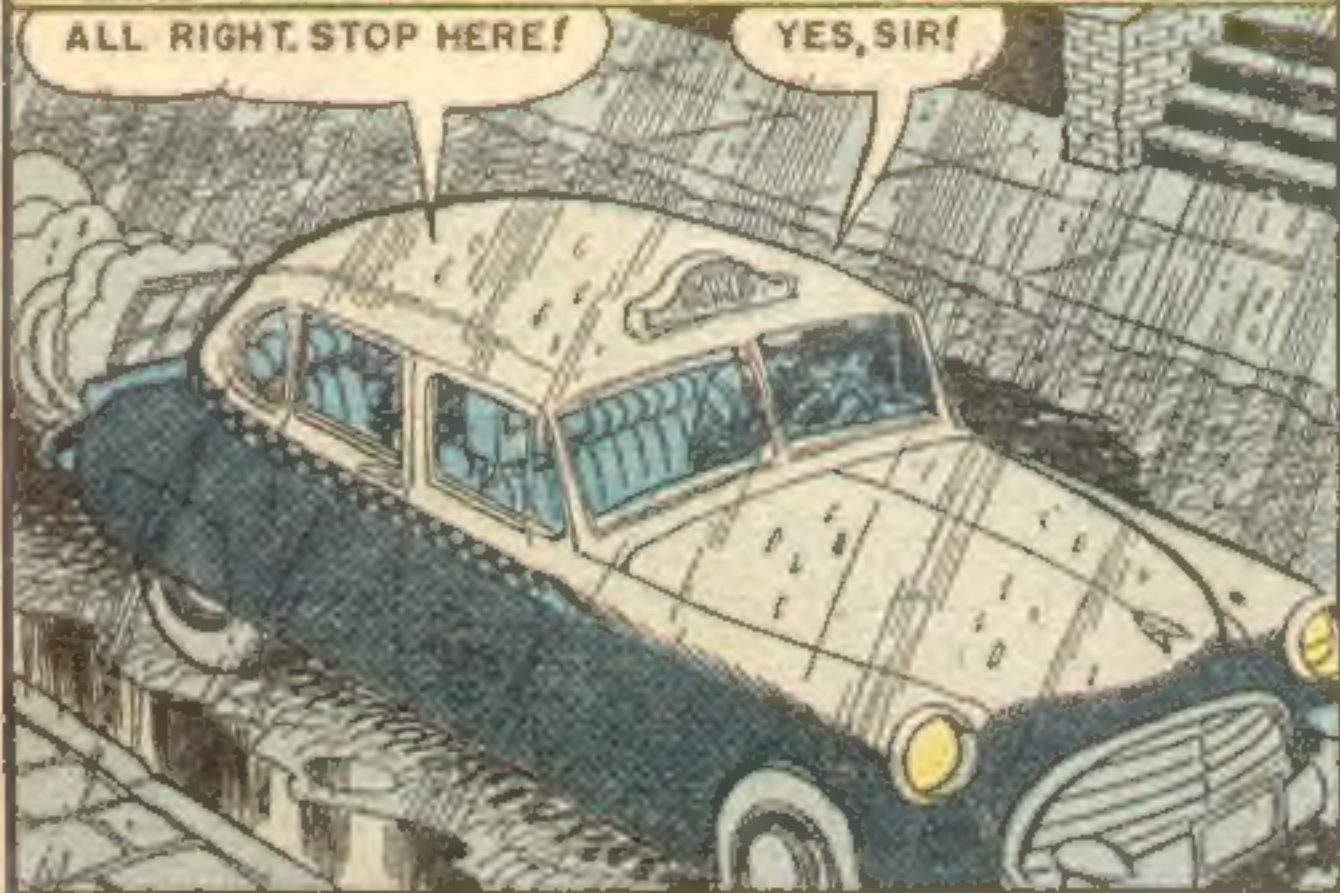
I HADN'T NOTICED!



HIS ANSWER IS CURT, ALMOST INSULTING. IT IS A BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE CARES NOT TO CONVERSE. YOU SHRUG AND GUIDE YOUR HEAP THROUGH THE REFLECTIONS AND THE TORRENTS TOWARD THE ADDRESS HE'S GIVEN YOU...

ALL RIGHT. STOP HERE!

YES, SIR!



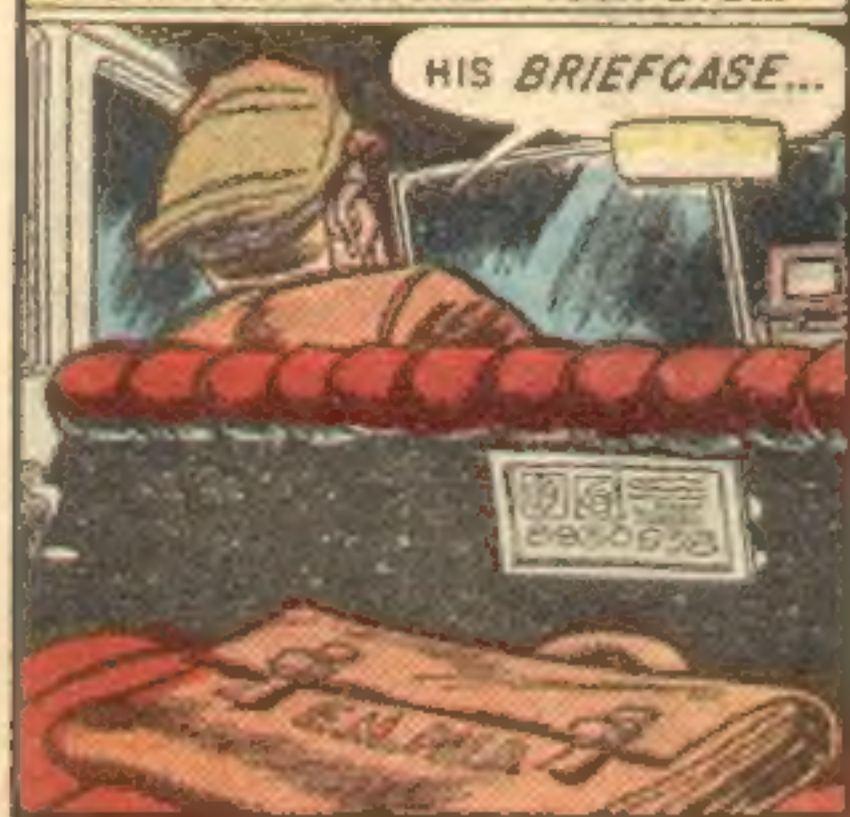
THE STREET IS IN ONE OF THE WORST NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE CITY... A NARROW, LITTER-STREWN, COBBLESTONE ALLEY MESHED BETWEEN SAD-FACED, STARVING TENEMENTS. YOUR FARE STEPS OUT INTO THE DOWNPOUR...

WAIT HERE FOR ME...

YES, SIR!



HE SCURRIES INTO A DARKENED HALLWAY AND DISAPPEARS INTO THE SHADOWS. YOU SHRUG, GLANCE AT THE METER, AND SETTLE BACK TO WAIT. THE RAIN IS LETTING UP NOW. THE STREET IS A BLACK MIRROR REFLECTING THE SQUALOR THAT RIMS IT AT EITHER CURB. SOMETHING IN THE MIRROR CATCHES YOUR EYE...



YOU TURN AROUND AND STARE AT THE SHINY NEW LEATHER BRIEFCASE YOUR CUSTOMER HAS LEFT ON THE BACK SEAT. THE GOLD INITIALS PULSATE IN THE LIGHT FROM THE STREET LAMP...



THE NEWSPAPER ROLLED UP BESIDE YOU REMINDS YOU, OF COURSE...



YOU PULL OUT YOUR PACK OF BUTTS, FISHING FOR ANOTHER CIGARETTE. THE PACK IS EMPTY. YOU CURSE. FAR DOWN THE BLOCK, AT THE CORNER, A DIM LIGHT FILTERS THROUGH A STORE WINDOW, SILHOUETTING THE LETTERS PAINTED ON IT...



YOU SWING FROM THE CAB AND START DOWN THE LONG DARK STREET. THE RAIN HAS STOPPED. A MUDDY STREAM OF WATER RUSHING HEADLONG AT THE CURBSIDE POURS DOWN INTO A FOUL-SMELLING SEWER, PULLING THE LAST TRACES OF RAIN WITH IT. UP ABOVE, THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING UP... AND HERE AND THERE, A STAR BLINKS THROUGH A BLACK HOLE IN THE GREY COVER...



YOU'RE ALMOST TO THE CORNER WHEN THE LIGHTS IN THE BAR-WINDOW DISAPPEAR AND BLACKNESS DESCENDS. THE SIGN IN THE DOOR LAUGHS AT YOU, AND THE LAUGH ECHOES OVER THE SLICK STREETS AND OFF THE GRINNING FACES OF THE TENEMENTS...



THE LAUGH DIES. SILENCE CLOSES IN, THICK, BLACK, FRIGHTENING SILENCE. STRANGE. NO RADIO PLAYING? NO BABY CRYING? NO SOUNDS OF THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE BEHIND THE MUTE TENEMENT FACADES? JUST SILENCE...



THEN WHY THE BAR? WHAT BUSINESS COULD A BAR DO IN A CONDEMNED TENEMENT DISTRICT? YOU START BACK TOWARD YOUR CAB. AND THEN YOU HEAR THEM. AT FIRST YOU THINK THEY'RE ECHOES OF YOUR OWN...BUT WHEN YOU STOP, THEY CONTINUE. . .

FOOTSTEPS. SOMEONE'S FOLLOWING ME.



YOU QUICKEN YOUR STEPS. THE CAB IS A MILLION MILES AWAY. BEHIND YOU, THE FOOTSTEPS INCREASE THEIR TEMPO TOO. YOU BEGIN TO RUN...

THE CAB! I'LL NEVER REACH IT IN TIME.



THE OPEN HALLWAY YAWNS AT YOU. YOU DUCK IN, CRINGING IN THE SHADOWS. A FIGURE HURRIES BY...BLACK OVERCOAT...BLACK HAT...

HIM! MY CUSTOMER! MULLER.



YOU HEAR HIS FOOTSTEPS POUNDING UP THE BLOCK. IN YOUR CHEST, YOUR HEART IS POUNDING TOO. THEN THE FOOTSTEPS STOP...AND YOUR HEART SKIPS A BEAT...

HE'S COMING BACK!



YOU BACK OFF...INTO THE GLOOM. THE FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. HE STANDS FRAMED IN THE HALLWAY ENTRANCE...HIS EYES BURNING LIKE TWO WHITE-HOT COALS...

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE, MY FRIEND! YOU'RE TRAPPED!



HIS EYES SEEM TO PIERCE THE DARKNESS, SEEM TO SEARCH YOU OUT OF THE SHADOWS. CAN HE SEE YOU THERE? CAN HIS EYES PENETRATE THE NIGHT LIKE...LIKE...

LIKE A BAT'S?! LIKE A VAMPIRE'S?!



YOU SHRIEK. YOU OPEN YOUR QUIVERING LIPS AND YOU SHRIEK. AND YOU TURN AND RUN...DOWN THE LONG BLACK CORRIDOR...STUMBLING, GETTING UP, RUNNING AGAIN...

IT'S NO USE! YOU'RE TRAPPED! I'VE CAUGHT YOU!

NO! NO!



THE CELLAR DOOR HANGS CRAZILY ON BROKEN RUSTED HINGES. STEPS LEAD DOWNWARD INTO BLACKNESS. YOU LUNGE THROUGH...



THE STEPS, ROTTED AND DECAYED, GIVE WAY BENEATH YOUR WEIGHT AND YOU PLUNGE INTO THE DARKNESS...

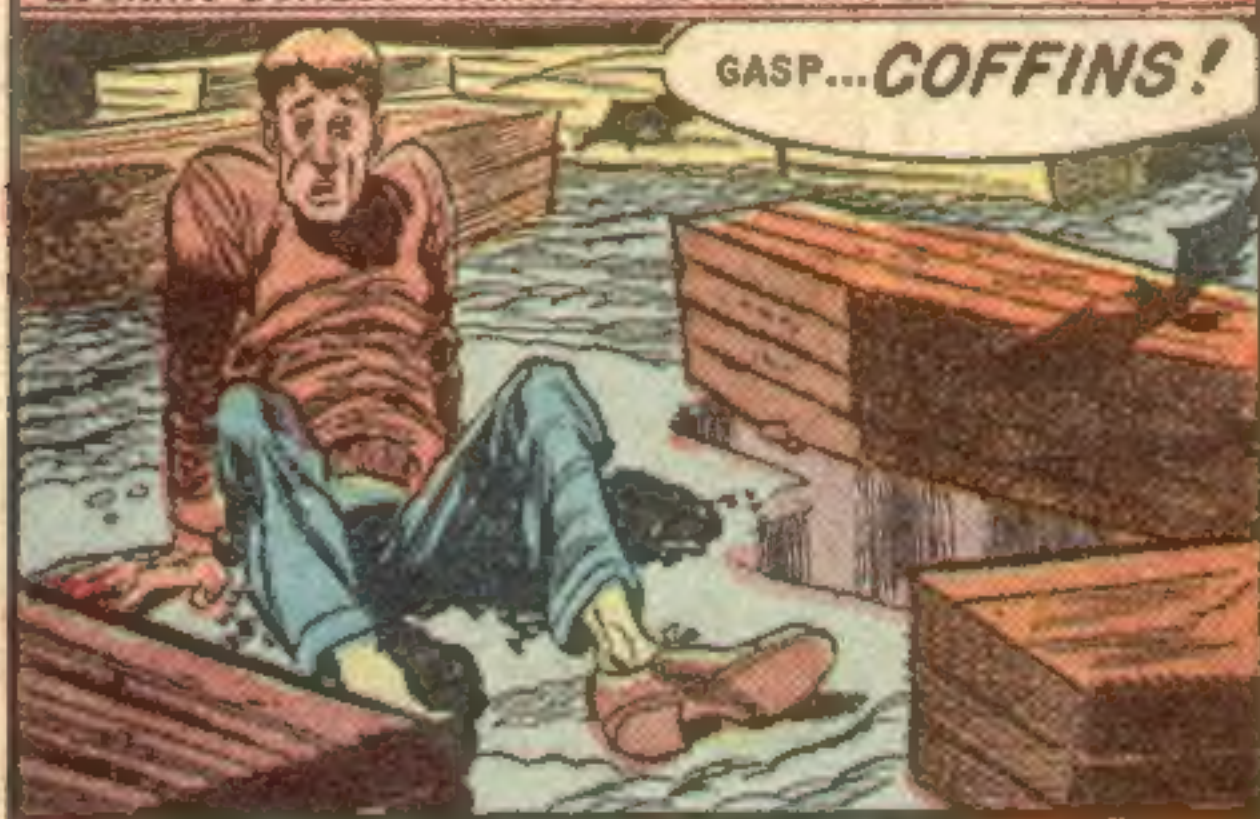


YOU STRUGGLE TO YOUR FEET. ABOVE YOU, YOUR CUSTOMER PEERS DOWN THROUGH THE CELLAR DOORWAY...



AND HIS LAUGH ECHOES LOUDLY THROUGH THE DAMP DARK CELLAR...

SUDDENLY THERE ARE STRANGE SOUNDS ABOUT YOU... CREAKING NOISES... AND DEEP SIGHS... AND FLUTTERINGS IN THE DARK. THE CELLAR IS FILLED WITH LONG EVIL-LOOKING BOXES. NO... NOT BOXES AT ALL...



THE LIDS HAVE COME ALIVE NOW, SLIPPING FROM THE COFFINS, SWINGING UPWARD, FALLING BACK. GHAUNT-FACED FIGURES, WITH SLANTED EYES AND FANGED MOUTHS DOZING SPITTLE, RISE FROM THEIR DEPTHS...



THEY STUMBLE TOWARD YOU, SHRIEKING... LAUGHING... REACHING OUT...



AND THEN THEY ARE UPON YOU, THEIR FANGS RIPPING AND TEARING AT YOUR FLESH... THEIR DRY LIPS CLOSING OVER YOUR WOUNDS, DRAWING THE LIFE-FLUID THAT POURS RED FROM THEM...



AND YOU SCREAM. YOU ARE HELPLESS UNDER THEIR ONSLAUGHT. THERE IS NOTHING ELSE TO DO BUT SCREAM.

THE SCREAM ECHOES AND RE-ECHOES IN YOUR EARS. YOU CLAW AT THE COLD LEATHER SEAT... AND YOU OPEN YOUR EYES...

HUH? WHA?... WHERE AM I?



THE RAIN CHATTERS ON YOUR CAB ROOF. PEOPLE POUR FROM THE SUBWAY EXIT. THE NEWSIE CHANTS AT THEM...

READ ALL ABOUT IT!
ANOTHER BODY FOUND!
ANOTHER MURDER! READ ALL ABOUT IT!



YOU'RE BACK AT THE HACK-STAND, BY THE SUBWAY EXIT. THE REALIZATION DAWNS UPON YOU...

I... I FELL ASLEEP. I'VE BEEN DREAMING!



YOU STARE DOWN AT THE OPEN PAPER ON YOUR LAP. HIS NAME SEEMS TO RISE FROM THE BLOCKS OF TYPE... MAGNIFIED... BLACK AND SHINING...

DR. EGBERT MULLER!
WHY DID I DREAM ABOUT HIM? WHY...



AND THEN HE IS BESIDE YOU, HIS BLACK OVERCOAT PULLED UP, HIS BLACK HAT-BRIM TURNED DOWN, AND HIS EYES GLARING LIKE FIRE-LIGHTS...

BUSY?

NO SIREE! HOP IN! WHERE TO?



YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK AT THE INITIALS ON THE BRIEF-CASE HE IS CARRYING. YOU KNOW WHO HE IS. HE MUTTERS THE STREET AND NUMBER AND SLIDES INTO THE BACK SEAT. YOU MESH GEARS AND PULL AWAY...

WHY DID I DREAM ABOUT HIM? AND THE VAMPIRES... ATTACKING ME? WHAT DID IT ALL MEAN?



SUDDENLY, YOU KNOW. YOU KNOW THE MEANING OF YOUR NIGHTMARE. AND YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO...

THIS ISN'T THE WAY...

IT'S A SHORT-CUT, DOCTOR MULLER...



YOU STOP THE CAB. IT'S ONE OF THE WORST NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE CITY. THE NEIGHBORHOOD YOU DREAMED ABOUT...

YOU...YOU KNOW ME?

YES, DOCTOR! GET OUT...

IT'S CLEAR NOW. THE WHOLE DREAM IS CLEAR. DR. EGBERT MULLER IS A *THREAT* TO YOU. *THAT'S* WHY YOU DREAMED OF HIM *FOLLOWING YOU...TRACKING YOU DOWN...*

MY...MY BRIEFCASE! I LEFT IT ON THE SEAT!

YOU WON'T NEED IT, DOC...

AND THE *VAMPIRES*...THE ONES THAT ATTACKED YOU IN THE *CELLAR*. DOCTOR MULLER *KNOWS* ABOUT VAMPIRES. *ALL* ABOUT THEM. SOONER OR LATER HE'D *CONVINCE THE POLICE*...

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? THIS HALLWAY...IT'S SO DARK...

KEEP GOING!

IT WOULD BE HIS VAST KNOWLEDGE OF VAMPIRES THAT WOULD FINALLY MEAN YOUR ULTIMATE DEATH. THE DREAM MADE SENSE. THE DREAM WAS A WARNING...

WHO ARE YOU? WHO...OH, NO! NO! MY GOD!

YES, DOCTOR! YES...

HE STRUGGLES, BUT YOU ARE STRONG. YOU BEND AND SINK YOUR FANGS INTO HIS SOFT WHITE GURGLING NECK...DRAWING IN THE THICK RED LIFE-FLUID THAT YOU MUST HAVE...

AND WHEN THE LAST DROP IS GONE, YOU FLING HIS LIFELESS BODY DOWN THE ROTTED CELLAR STEPS WITH THE OTHERS. ONLY *THIRTEEN* VICTIMS? HAH! WAIT TILL THEY FIND THE *REST* DOWN THERE! AS DAWN BREAKS, YOU OPEN THE TRUNK OF YOUR CAB, CRAWL IN ONTO THE THIN LAYER OF SOIL AND YAWN...

I'D...HO-HUM...BETTER GET A *GOOD* DAY'S REST *TODAY!* IMAGINE... A VAMPIRE FALLING ASLEEP AT *NIGHT!* AND *DREAMING*, YET...

HEH, HEH. NOW *SOME* PEOPLE MIGHT ACCUSE ME OF SPINNING *HACK YARNS*, BUT *YOU* WOULDN'T AGREE, *WOULD YOU*, KIDDIES? THE ONLY THING I'M *GUILTY* OF IS *TAXI-NG* YOUR *IMAGINATION* ONCE IN A WHILE. WELL, I'VE GOT TO *METER* FRIEND, SO I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE VAULT-KEEPER FOR *HIS* OFFERING. *WHO'S* THE *FRIEND*, YOU ASK? OH, SOME *SUCKER* I KNOW. THEY SPOTTED HIM AS A *HICK* WHEN HE *CAME* TO NEW YORK. SOLD HIM THE *VAMPIRE STATE BUILDING*. ISN'T THAT A *BLOODY SHAME?* 'BYE, NOW. DIG YOU LATER!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! VENTURE INTO THE VAULT, VULTURES. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO NARRATE ANOTHER NAUSEATING NOVELETTE FROM MY CRAWLY COLLECTION. SO COME IN, SIT DOWN ON THAT PILE OF SHOE-BOXES THERE, AND I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-CURDLING YARN I CALL...

CURIOSITY KILLED...



THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME LEFT. HE'S RIGHT OUTSIDE THE BEDROOM DOOR SOONER OR LATER HE'LL GET IT OPEN AND I'LL... I'LL BE MURDERED. I'M SCRIBBLING THIS DOWN AS FAST AS I CAN SO YOU'LL KNOW THE WHOLE STORY. MY NAME IS HENRIETTA CLAYTON I LIVE IN THE ROYAL ARMS APARTMENT HOTEL. IT ALL STARTED THE MORNING I WENT DOWN THE HALL TO VISIT MY FRIEND, EMILY DURAND

YES? OH, IT'S YOU, MRS CLAYTON.

IS EMILY AT HOME, MR DURAND? I...ER...WANTED TO GET A RECIPE.



FIRST LET ME SAY THAT, EVER SINCE I'D KNOWN HIM, WALLACE DURAND HAD ALWAYS BEEN SHY, QUIET, AND COMPLETELY DOMINATED BY HIS WIFE, EMILY. THAT MORNING, HE SEEMED LIKE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSON. HE GRINNED AT ME ..

EMILY'S *GONE*, MRS. CLAYTON. SHE'S TAKEN A *TRIP*... TO THE *COAST*... TO VISIT *RELATIVES*.

OH? SHE DIDN'T MENTION IT!



WALLACE DURAND STOOD STRAIGHT, LOOKING AT ME DEFIANTLY. HE SEEMED TALLER SOMEHOW... TALLER THAN HE'D EVER BEEN... LIKE HEAVY WEIGHTS HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM HIS TIRED SHOULDERS...

IT WAS *SUDDEN*, MRS. CLAYTON. SHE LEFT *LAST NIGHT*. AND NOW IF YOU'LL *EXCUSE* ME...

Y-YES, MR. DURAND! I'M SORRY I DISTURBED YOU...



HE SLAMMED THE DOOR. *SLAMMED IT*, MIND YOU! MR. DURAND... THE *MILQUETOAST*... THE *WEAKLING*... SLAMMED THE DOOR IN MY FACE. I STOOD THERE... *SHOCKED*? I COULDN'T *BELIEVE* IT...

EMILY'D GONE AWAY *BEFORE*. BUT WALLACE DURAND HAD *NEVER* BEHAVED THAT WAY WHILE SHE'D BEEN GONE. IT WAS AS IF HE *KNEW* SHE WASN'T COMING BACK...

SOMETHING'S *WRONG*. I FEEL IT IN MY BONES! HE'S... HE'S *DONE* SOMETHING TO EMILY



I RANG FOR THE ELEVATOR. A COLD SHIVER RAN UP MY SPINE. I GLANCED AT MY WATCH. 8 40 STILL TIME.

MORN N', MRS. CLAYTON.

GOOD MORNING, GEORGE.. ER... YOU BEEN *ON ALL NIGHT*?



SINCE *NINE P.M.*, MA'AM? ANYTHIN' *WRONG*?

DID YOU TAKE *MRS. DURAND* DOWN LAST NIGHT, GEORGE? *EMILY DURAND*? SHE WOULD HAVE HAD A *SUITCASE*...



NO, MA'AM! I BROUGHT *YOU* AND *MRS. DURAND* UP AT *TEN P.M.* LAST NIGHT, *REMEMBER*? THAT'S THE *LAST I SAW* OF HER. DIDN'T TAKE HER *DOWN* LAST NIGHT AT *ALL*!

I SEE! ER SUPPOSE SHE *WALKED* DOWN, GEORGE? WHO'D SEE HER?



WALKED DOWN, MRS. CLAYTON? **FOURTEEN FLOORS?** I HARDLY THINK SHE'D WALK DOWN. BESIDES IF SHE DID, JED WOULD HAVE SEEN HER. HE WAS AT THE **DESK** ALL NIGHT... WORKIN' THE **SWITCHBOARD**.

ASK HIM FOR ME, WILL YOU, GEORGE? ASK JED IF HE SAW MRS. OR MR. DURAND LAST NIGHT!

GEORGE NODDED. THE ELEVATOR DOOR SLID CLOSED, AND IT WHIRLED AWAY. I WATCHED THE HAND ABOVE SWING SLOWLY AROUND TOWARDS ONE. I WENT BACK TO MY OWN APARTMENT. MILTON WAS GETTING INTO HIS COAT. MILTON IS MY HUSBAND...

WELL, HENRIETTA, GOOD-BYE! I'M OFF...

MILTON! HE'S KILLED HER!

HUH? WHO?

MR. DURAND! HE'S KILLED EMILY! I KNOW IT!

MILTON LOOKED AT ME AND BEGAN TO GIGGLE...

WALLY? KILL EMILY? DON'T BE SILLY! HE... HE WOULDN'T HAVE THE NERVE! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SO?

HE'S ACTING SO STRANGELY, SO RUDE. HE SAID EMILY WENT ON A TRIP. BUT I CHECKED. SHE HASN'T LEFT THIS BUILDING SINCE WE CAME HOME FROM THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL LAST NIGHT.

I HEARD THE ELEVATOR DOOR OUTSIDE SLIDE OPEN. I PEEPED OUT. GEORGE WAS COMING TOWARD MY APARTMENT

WELL, GEORGE? WHAT DID JED SAY?

HE SAID NOBODY CAME DOWN THOSE STAIRS LAST NIGHT, MA'AM. BUT NOBODY...

I THANKED GEORGE AND HE SHUFFLED OFF I TURNED TO MILTON

THEN SHE'S STILL IN THERE, MILTON! POOR EMILY... LYIN' DEAD IN THAT APARTMENT.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT IF WALLY DID MURDER EMILY, HE'D HAVE GOTTEN RID OF HER BODY, HENRIETTA?

HOW, MILTON? THAT'S JUST IT! HOW? HE COULDN'T CARRY HER BODY DOWN FOURTEEN FLIGHTS! BESIDES, JED SAID NOBODY CAME DOWN THE STAIRS LAST NIGHT HE COULDN'T TAKE HER DOWN IN THE ELEVATOR. AND THE FIRE-ESCAPE WOULD BE TOO RISKY. NO! SHE'S STILL IN THERE!

WELL, I'M LATE. I'VE GOT TO GO TO THE OFFICE. LOOK, HENRIETTA. IF YOU'RE SO SURE, WHY DON'T YOU CALL THE POLICE?

MILTON LEFT AND I HEARD THE ELEVATOR COME AND TAKE HIM DOWN. I WENT TO THE PHONE. I PICKED UP THE RECEIVER. I HESITATED.

I... I CAN'T CALL THE POLICE. I HAVE NO PROOF. I'VE GOT TO HAVE PROOF.



I PUT DOWN THE PHONE AND WENT TO THE KITCHEN. I TOOK A MEASURING CUP FROM THE CUPBOARD AND WENT DOWN THE HALL TO THE DURAND APARTMENT. I KNOCKED. I HEARD FOOTSTEPS MOVING AROUND INSIDE, AND WALLACE DURAND OPENED THE DOOR...

OH, IT'S YOU AGAIN NOW WHAT?

COULD I BORROW A CUP OF SUGAR, MR. DURAND? I'M A LITTLE SHORT!



I STARTED IN BUT MR. DURAND BLOCKED MY WAY. HE LIFTED THE CUP FROM MY HAND

I'LL GET IT FOR YOU, MRS. CLAYTON.

OH... THANKS



HE CLOSED THE DOOR AND LOCKED IT. HE WOULDN'T LET ME IN. HE WAS HIDING SOMETHING, ALL RIGHT. EMILY WAS IN THERE! POOR EMILY...

HERE YOU ARE!

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, MR. DURAND..



HE SLAMMED THE DOOR. I WAS ALONE IN THE HALL. I WENT BACK TO MY APARTMENT. MY HAND SHOOK...

ALL RIGHT, WALLACE DURAND! ALL RIGHT! I'LL GET THE PROOF. YOU'LL SEE...

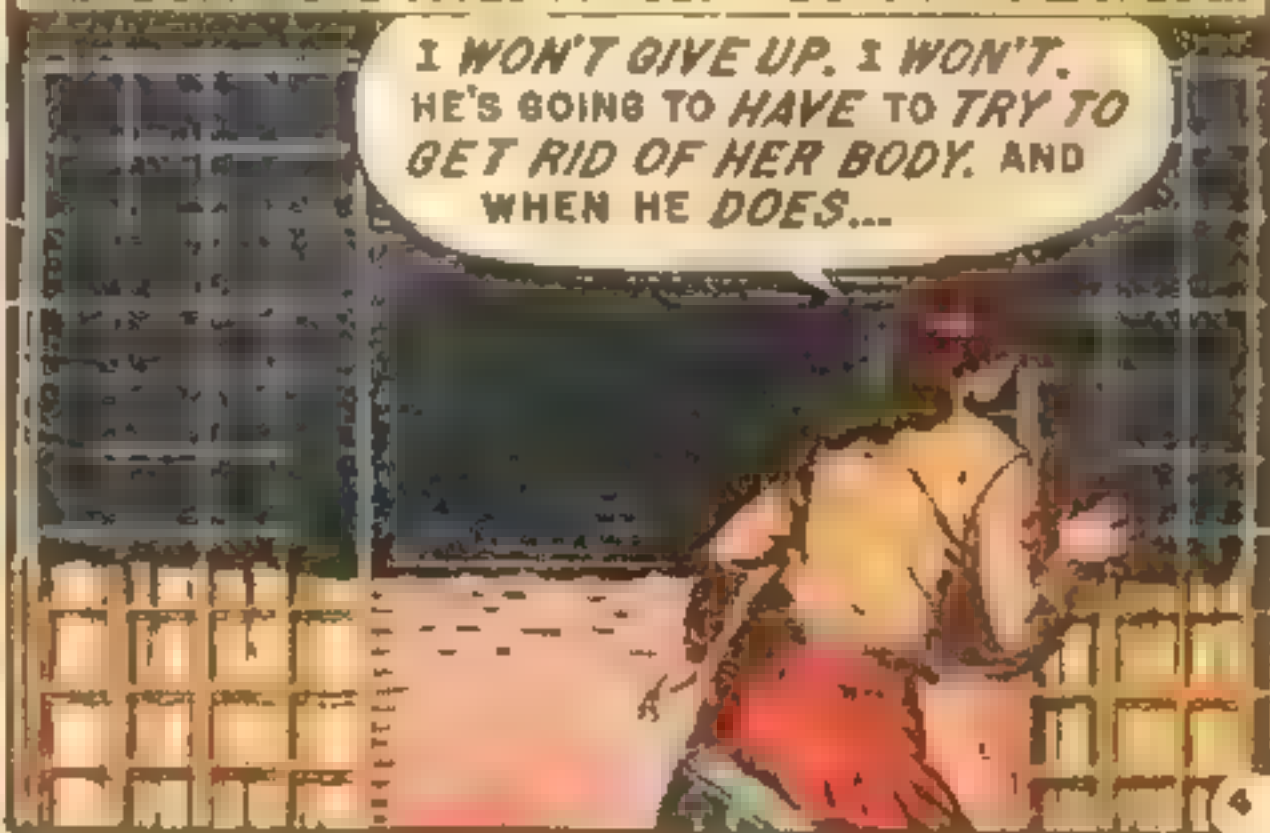


I PULLED A CHAIR UP TO THE APARTMENT DOOR AND SAT DOWN. I OPENED IT A CRACK SO I COULD WATCH THE DURAND'S DOOR. I WAITED. AFTER AN HOUR, MR DURAND CAME OUT... LOCKED THE DOOR CAREFULLY... AND PRESSED THE ELEVATOR BELL.



WHEN HE WAS GONE, I DARTED ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM AND OUT THE FRENCH DOORS. THE DURANDS AND WE SHARED A TERRACE. I CROSSED THE LOW DIVIDING-WALL AND PEEPED INTO THEIR APARTMENT. THE BLINDS WERE DRAWN. I COULDN'T SEE. THE DOOR WAS LOCKED...

I WON'T GIVE UP. I WON'T. HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO TRY TO GET RID OF HER BODY. AND WHEN HE DOES...



ABOUT TWO HOURS LATER, WALLACE DURAND CAME BACK. HE CARRIED A SMALL CARTON ABOUT THE SIZE OF A SHOE BOX.



HE LET HIMSELF INTO HIS APARTMENT, AND I HEARD HIM LOCK IT FROM THE INSIDE. I TOOK THE CUP OF SUGAR AND WENT DOWN THE HALL AND KNOCKED.



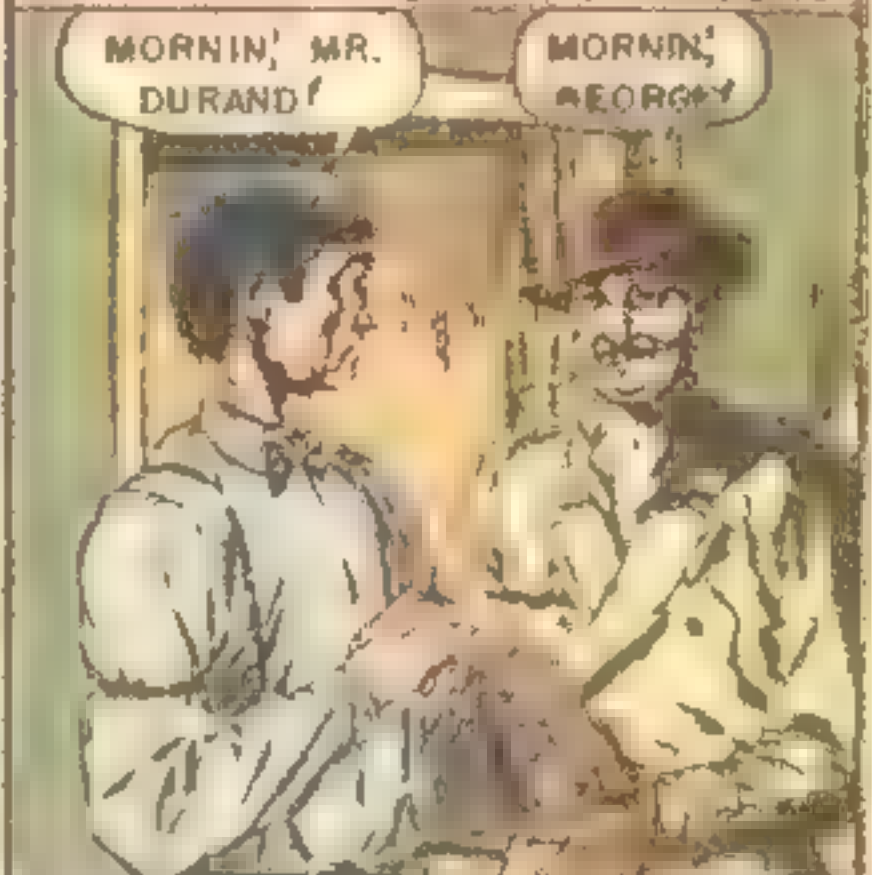
HE SEEMED ANNOYED. HE SNATCHED THE SUGAR, LOCKED THE DOOR, AND RETURNED WITH THE EMPTY GLASS...



HE SLAMMED THE DOOR IN MY FACE...



HE WAS HIDING SOMETHING ALL RIGHT. IT WAS OBVIOUS. I WAS DETERMINED TO PROVE HIS HORRENDOUS DEED. SO I WATCHED EVERY DAY, HE WENT OUT IN THE MORNING *EMPTY HANDED*...



AND EVERY DAY HE CAME BACK WITH ANOTHER SHOE-BOX...



FINALLY AFTER TWO MONTHS OF THIS... GOING OUT *EMPTY-HANDED* AND COMING BACK TWO HOURS LATER WITH THE INEVITABLE *SHOE BOX*... I ACCOSTED HIM ONE DAY.



I THOUGHT MY EARS WERE DECEIVING ME. I HEARD IT PLAIN AS DAY. A *SCRATCHING SOUND...INSIDE THE BOX HE WAS CARRYING...*

N-NEVER, MR. DURAND?

EMILY'S LEFT ME FOR GOOD! NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND...



HE WENT INSIDE. I WENT BACK TO MY APARTMENT. I TRIED TO THINK. WHAT DID HE HAVE IN THAT BOX? WAS EMILY'S BODY STILL IN THAT APARTMENT, OR HAD WALLACE DURAND MANAGED TO GET RID OF IT? AND THEN, THAT NIGHT, AS I FACED THE LIVING ROOM FLOOR...



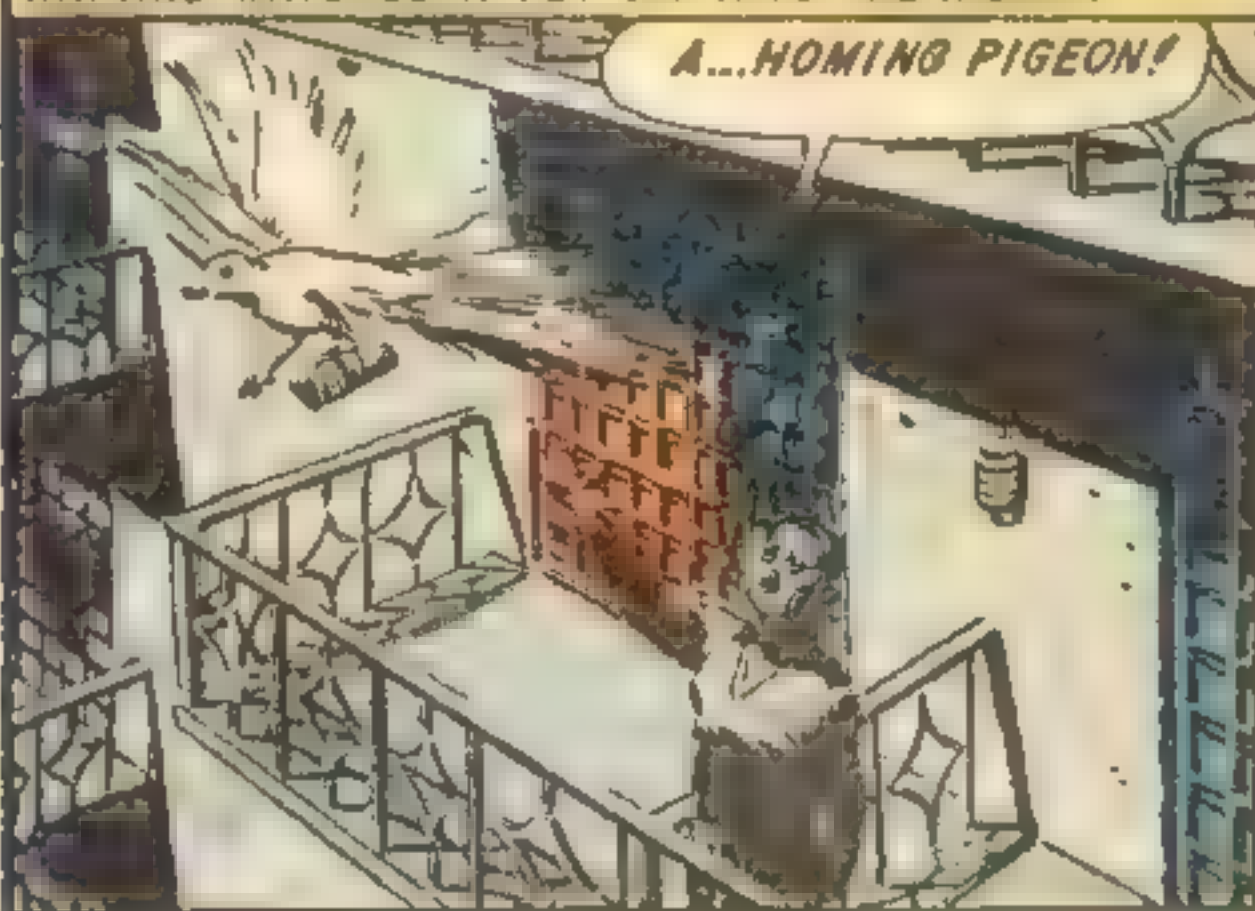
WHAT'S THAT?

THERE WAS A FLAPPING SOUND OUT ON THE TERRACE. I TIPTOED TO THE FRENCH DOORS. WALLACE DURAND WAS OUT THERE...AND HE HELD SOMETHING IN HIS OUTSTRETCHED HANDS...



A...A... PIGEON!

MR. DURAND CHECKED THE SMALL CAN STRAPPED TO THE PIGEON'S LEG. THEN HE TOSSED THE BIRD INTO THE AIR AND WATCHED IT FLY OFF INTO THE NIGHT.



A...HOMING PIGEON!

I WOKE UP MILTON I TOLD HIM WHAT I'D SEEN...

SO WHAT? WHAT IN BLAZES HAS ONE THING TO DO WITH THE OTHER?

DON'T YOU SEE, MILTON? HE'S BEEN GETTING RID OF EMILY'S REMAINS THAT WAY. A LITTLE BIT AT A TIME... IN THAT CAN STRAPPED TO THE PIGEON'S LEG...



GOOD LORD. IT WOULD TAKE MONTHS!

I'M GOING TO CALL THE POLICE.



NO! WAIT! YOU CAN'T BE SURE! WHY DON'T YOU FOLLOW HIM TOMORROW MORNING? FIND OUT WHERE HE GETS THOSE BIRDS?



AND THEN I'LL SEE WHAT HE DOES WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE CAN...

THAT'LL BE THE PROOF YOU NEED!

YES...YES...



I TOOK MILTON'S ADVICE... AND THE NEXT DAY, I FOLLOWED WALLACE DURAND WHEN HE LEFT THE ROYAL ARMS APARTMENT HOTEL. HE TOOK A SUBWAY OUT OF THE CITY TO THE END OF THE LINE. THEN A BUS. I FOLLOWED THE BUS IN A TAXI...

HE'S GETTING OFF ALL RIGHT, DRIVER. I'LL GET OUT HERE...



MR. DURAND WENT TO THE REAR OF A RUNDOWN SHACK. I COULD HEAR THE LOUD BARKING OF DOGS.

SO THAT'S IT...



IT WAS ALL SO CLEAR. I WATCHED HIM UNTIE THE CAN FROM THE HOMING PIGEON THAT HAD ARRIVED THAT NIGHT AND EMPTY THE CONTENTS INTO THE KENNEL FULL OF SLOB-BERING HUNGRY HOUNDS



THEN HE TOOK *ANOTHER* PIGEON FROM THE COUP, PLACED IT IN A *SHOE-BOX*, AND WENT AWAY. I WAITED UNTIL HE WAS GONE BEFORE I CAME OUT OF MY HIDING PLACE. I FELT SICK... NAUSEOUS. *POOR EMILY!* WHEN I FINALLY GOT BACK TO MY APARTMENT...

MILTON YOU'RE HOME EARLY!

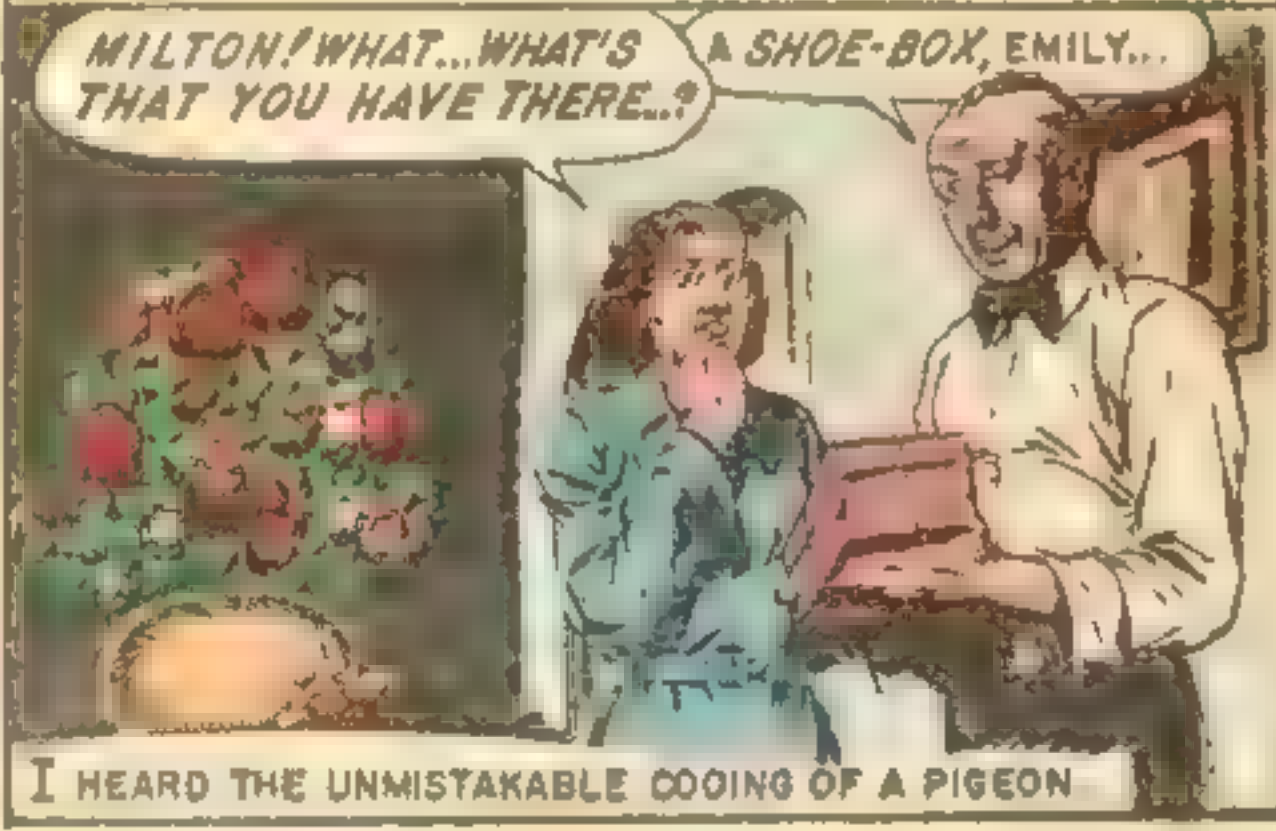
YES, EMILY! COME IN I'VE BEEN WAITING!



MILTON LOOKED STRANGE. HE HAD A WILD GLEAM IN HIS USUALLY SAD EYES. EMILY AND I HAD BEEN ATTRACTED TO EACH OTHER BECAUSE WE WERE SO MUCH ALIKE... DOMINATING WIVES WHO LORDED OVER SHY, QUIET, MILQUETOAST HUSBANDS...

MILTON! WHAT... WHAT'S THAT YOU HAVE THERE...?

A *SHOE-BOX*, EMILY...



I HEARD THE UNMISTAKABLE COOING OF A PIGEON

I SCREAMED AND RUSHED FOR THE BED-ROOM. I LOCKED MYSELF IN. I WAS TRAPPED. MILTON GIGGLED... HIS VOICE DRIFTING THROUGH THE DOOR...

WE PLANNED IT THIS WAY, HENRIETTA! *FIRST* WALLY. THEN *ME!* WE RENTED THE *SHACK*, THE *DOGS*, THE *PIGEONS*... BUT YOU FOUND OUT... *TOO SOON*...



THE DOOR IS OPENING. I'LL HAVE TO STOP WRITING...

SO *NOW*, EVEN THOUGH WALLY ISN'T *THROUGH* GETTING RID OF EMILY'S BODY... I'LL HAVE TO *START*, HENRIETTA... *START BY KILLING* YOU... THEN *CUTTING* YOU UP INTO *TINY LITTLE PIECES*... BIG ENOUGH TO FIT IN CANS...



HE'S COMING TOWARD ME HE'S

AT THIS POINT OUR MANUSCRIPT *ENDS*, KIDDIES... *ENDS* IN A *BLOODY SMEAR!* HENRIETTA IS NOW... FOR THE *BIRDS!* HOW DID I GET HOLD OF THIS LITTLE YARN, YOU ASK? SO WHO DO YOU THINK *OWNED* THE *SHACK*... THE *DOGS*... THE *PIGEONS*?

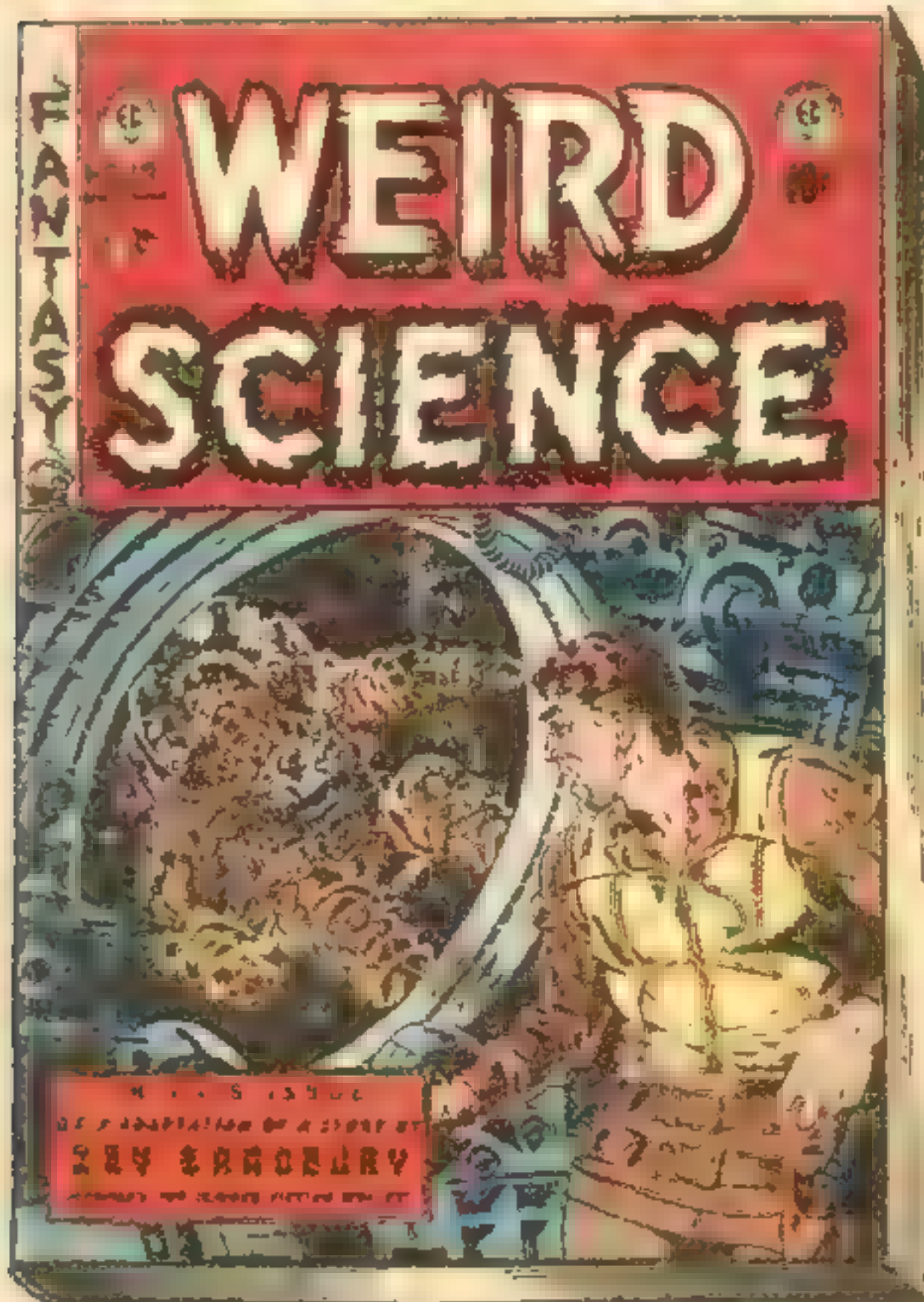
THAT WAS THE *DEAL!* WALLY AND MILTON GOT THE *USE* OF THEM FOR THE *STORY RIGHTS*. HEH, HEH. NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE *CRYPT-KEEPER*. SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, *THE VAULT OF HORROR!* TILL THEN... COOOO?



THE END

7

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OF OUR SCIENCE-FICTION
MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR**



LOOK FOR THESE SEALS WHEN YOU BUY!

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HAUNT OF FEAR • VAULT OF HORROR
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TWO-FISTED TALES • FRONTLINE COMBAT
MAD
WEIRD SCIENCE • WEIRD FANTASY
AND THE 250 ANNUAL ANTHOLOGIES
WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY
TWO-FISTED ANNUAL • TALES OF TERROR

SQUEEZE!

Not ten seconds after Kendall had seized the payroll bag and started toward the factory exit, he knew he was being pursued. He could hear their feet clattering along the concrete walk behind him, then a shot screamed along the corridor and ricocheted off the wall not five feet from his head. They were armed . . . and they meant business. And from the sound their shoes were making, there were at least three guards tracking him.

Almost in panic, Kendall clawed at his coat pocket and fumbled his gun free as he ran. It was the three guards against him . . . their lives against his own, he thought as he fled. They had him badly outnumbered . . . there wasn't much chance for him to escape . . .

Then he saw the steel staircase spiraling up far overhead to the catwalk which ran the length of the factory. This might help him squeeze out of the trap, Kendall thought, as he raced frenziedly up the steps. In another moment he was scampering along the catwalk and could hear them pounding up the steps after him. In a second they'd have him cornered; if he turned to fight, their bullets would cut him down in the first exchange of hot lead. And if he surrendered, it meant conviction for the fourth time . . . imprisonment for the rest of his life!

He stopped momentarily, amazement on his face. There, just a short

jump below, was a small area surrounded by steel walls. If he could just reach that haven, he'd be able to shoot at the guards as they came after him along the catwalk. And their own shots would be shrugged aside by those gleaming metal plates!

The jump jarred him more than he had expected: it was a half-minute before he recovered his balance and turned back to face the oncoming guards. The first of them reared up above him, leveled his gun. But he never pulled the trigger, because a bullet from below sent him reeling backwards.

Kendall crouched lower behind the steel walls . . . heard the guards' bullets ploughing into the plates with a shrill whine, then bounce harmlessly aside. He was safe, Kendall grinned to himself. At least for the moment. They couldn't get him with their guns . . . and if the two remaining guards gave him even the slightest target, he'd shoot to kill! Just one shot at each of the guards . . . that was all Kendall wanted . . .

A whirring sound made him pause in fear. He must be seeing things, he thought . . . but no! The steel plates that sheltered him . . . they were grinding toward one another, moving together ominously! He leaped to his feet and began to scream out his surrender, but it was too late! The walls could not be stopped . . . already they were pressing against him on each side. Already they were crushing his chest and legs . . . squeezing the breath out of his tortured lungs . . . mashing him into a bloody shadow on the sides of the huge steel vise he had heedlessly plunged into!



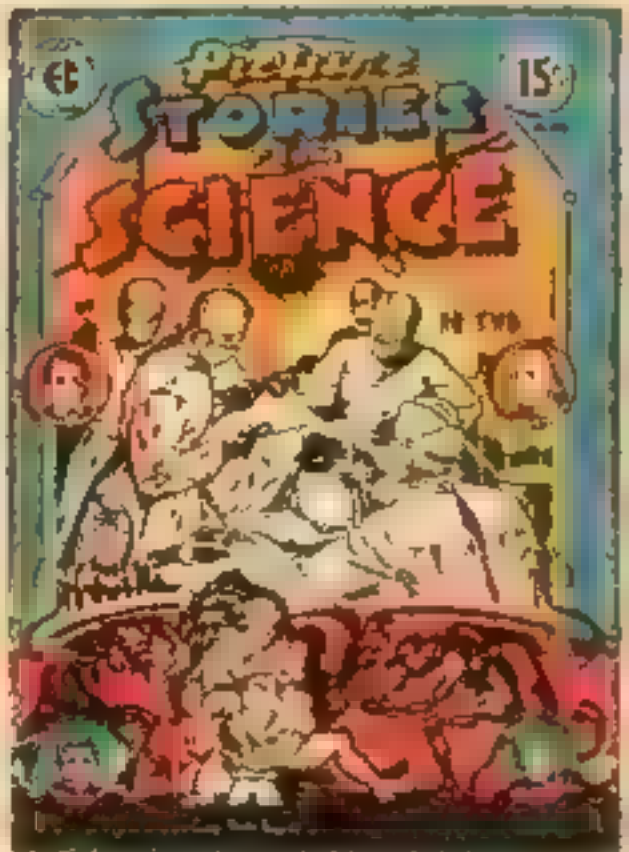
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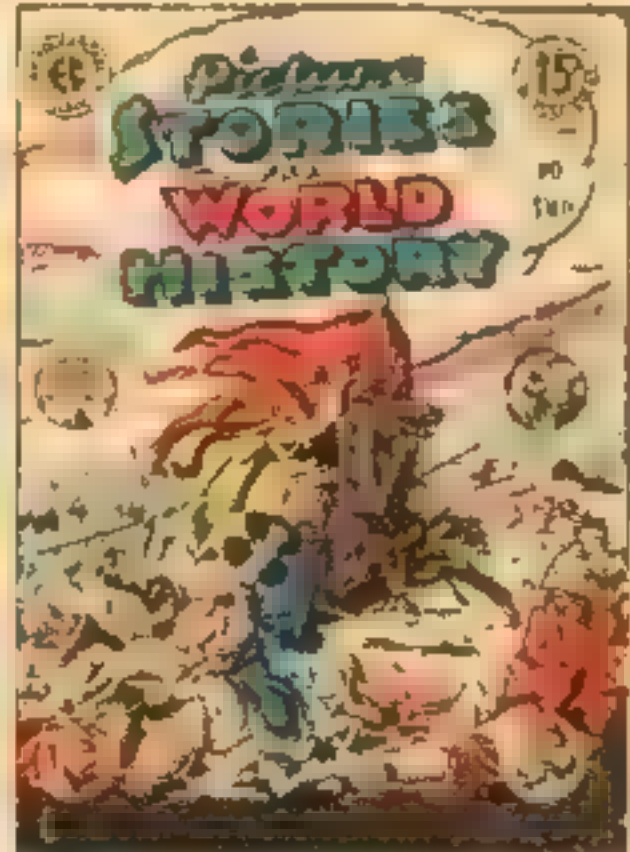


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THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! Guess all you EVANS fans can stop howling now! Gruesome George's biography and pitcher, as you probably noticed, and if you haven't, why not?, is on the inside front cover of this miserable mag. And now YOU can stop howling TOO, George! Ye Gods, these egotistical artists! Glory . . . glory . . . all they want is fame and fortune! Now take ME! All I want is FORTUNE . . . and all I get is FAMOUS! (IN-famous would be a BETTER word, C.K., old boy!—editors) I don't see them handing YOU TWO any laurel wreaths, you money-hungry perverts! (Money? What's "money," Al? Dunno, Bill. Sounds familiar, but there sure ain't been none of that stuff 'round HERE in some time!—ed.) Aw, you poor, poor boys! Isn't it a pity! You'll have to drive your LAST YEAR'S Cadillacs for a while yet! (But C.K.! The ASH-TRAYS are FULL!—ed.) Reefer-butts, I presume! (Of course . . . and KING-SIZE, too!—ed.) Oh, DIG those CRA-ZY proof-readers! And now for the mail . . .

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

We are three intellectual college ghouls who spend our evenings reading your degenerate literature. The protagonists in your most horrible stories remind us of some of our long-lost dates. (Now we know what happened to them!) Due to our advanced education, we are properly equipped to fully appreciate your subtlety and sarcasm. Please print this or we boycott! Degenerately yours,

Slimy Syd

Mummified Myrna

Just Plain Joyse

PROTAGONISTS??? Man! DIG those CRA-ZY co-eds!

Dear Fudge-Face,

All of your stories turned everyone in the house a lovely shade of green. My Aunt Minerva was eating when she read your book, and she's been in the regurgitarium (a coined word, so don't throw it up to me!) for the past week. I personally think you must be crazy, but then aren't we all?

Edwin Zureich

Sandusky, Ohio

CRA-ZY, man? That's what I said! DIG them CHARTREUSE Ohioans!

Most Beloved Crypt-Keeper,

I'm a steady fan of yours, and enjoy all of the E.C. mags very much! Here are a few additional titles for your "horror hit parade":

LADY OF PAIN (I will gore you!)

GONE SQUISHIN'

I'LL DISMEMBER APRIL!

CAN'T HELP LOATHING THAT CLAN OF MINE

Ralph Chapman

Anchorage, Alaska

DIG that CRA-ZY iceberg!

here're some more

THE WHITE STIFFS OF DOVER
ALL OF ME . . . WHY NOT EAT ALL
OF ME . . .
I'M PUKIN' OVER MY DEAD DOG
ROVER

Dick Duggan
Dubuque, Iowa

MAN! That dog is REAL GONE!

... how about these?:

JUMBLEDEYEBALLS

THE BLOODIEST BITE OF THE EAR
I WANT A GHOUL JUST LIKE THE
GHOUL THAT BURIED DEAR OLD
DAD

Maura (Mo) Miller
Chicago, Ill.

DIG that CRA-ZY battleship!

... How do you like:

OLD MACDONALD WAS EMBALMED
WHEN YOU AND I WERE HUNG,
MAGGIE!

Dave Borden and
Dick Merritt
Brookline, Mass.

DIG that . . . (Hey C.K.! Ditch the butt . . . here comes COPS in a SQUAD CAR . . . doin' 90 mph!—ed.)

[ZOOOOOOMMMM!]

(O.K., C.K.! They're gone!—ed.)

MAN! I thought they'd NEVER leave!

Dear C.K.,

The story by Ray Bradbury, "There Was an Old Woman," (T.C. No. 34) was tops. I read the original, but Ingels did it more than justice with his fine illustrations!

Warren A. Freiberg
Cicero, Ill.

... I love your mag, but I think that Ray Bradbury's story . . . stunk! What happened?

Ed Redling
Patterson, N. J.

Well, ya can't please EVERYBODY! Anywho, Mr. FREIBERG will be happy to find E.C.'s adaptation of Mr. B.'s "The Handler" . . . also illustrated by Ghastly Graham Ingels! . . . in the wind-up spot of this issue. Before closing, a couple of "it's-gonna-cost-you-money-if-n-er-sucker-enough-to-bite" announcements: A limited number (seven hundred fifty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-nine) of copies of the 3rd annual TALES OF TERROR, E.C.'s anthology of horror and SuspensStories, are now cluttering up the office. Help us unload! 25c! Also . . . subscriptions to any E.C. mag . . . 75c . . . 6 issues! Address for either or both of the above, mail, poetry, kicks, kisses, or 1953 Cadillacs is:

The Crypt-Keeper
Room 706, Dept. 36
225 Lafayette St.
N. Y. C. 12, N. Y.

HERE'S A TERROR-TALE OF
SPORTING LIFE! I CALL IT...

HOW GREEN WAS MY ALLEY



HIS JOB AS A TRAVELING SALESMAN HAD ENABLED ROBERT TO KEEP UP THE DECEPTION FOR THREE EXCITING YEARS. IT HAD BEEN SO SIMPLE TO CARRY ON HIS DOUBLE LIFE, SPENDING A WEEK WITH AMY, A WEEK WITH JEAN, AND TWO WEEKS ON THE ROAD. YES, ROBERT SMITH WAS A BIGAMIST...

MUST YOU GO, BOB? YOU
KNOW HOW I MISS YOU WHEN
YOU'RE AWAY.

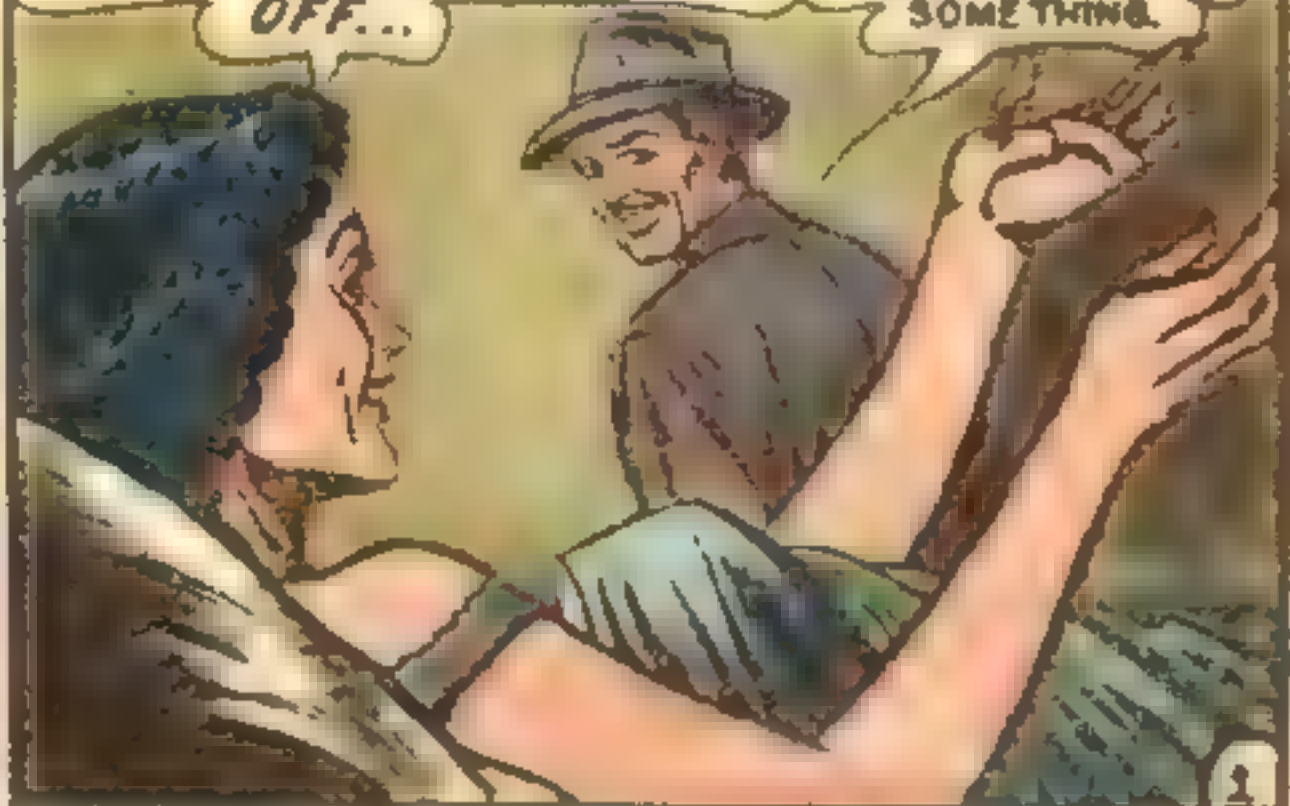
GOT TO EARN A
LIVING, AMY, HONEY.
WELL, GOOD-BYE. SEE
YOU IN A MONTH.



ROBERT LOOKED DOWN AT SLIM, DARKHAIRED AMY. SHE SNUGGLED SLEEPILY IN THE BED, REACHING TOWARD HIM...

KISS ME GOOD-BYE AND WISH
ME LUCK. THE NATIONAL
WOMAN'S AMATEUR ATHLETIC
TOURNAMENTS ARE TWO WEEKS
OFF...

SAY! I ALMOST
FORGOT YOUR
GOLF TOURNAMENT.
I BOUGHT YOU
SOMETHING.



ROBERT WENT OUT TO THE CAR. HE UNLOCKED THE TRUNK. INSIDE WERE TWO CAREFULLY WRAPPED PACKAGES. HE CHOSE ONE AND BROUGHT IT BACK INTO THE HOUSE TO THE



HERE, HONEY! FOR LUCK!

FOR ME, BOB? HOW SWEET! WHAT IS IT?

ROBERT PUT OUT HIS HAND...

WAIT! DON'T OPEN IT NOW! NOT UNTIL YOU GET TO YOUR GOLF TOURNAMENT. IT'S A SURPRISE! IT MAY HELP YOU WIN...

YOU'RE SO THOUGHTFUL, DARLING!



AMY PUT DOWN THE PACKAGE AND SLIPPED HER ARMS AROUND ROBERT'S NECK...

I REALLY HAVE TO GET GOING, HONEY. IT'S LATE! PLEASE...

BEAST! HOW CAN BUSINESS BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN... PLEASURE?



ROBERT SLIPPED AWAY FROM AMY AND PICKED UP HIS BAGS. SHE FOLLOWED HIM TO THE DOOR...

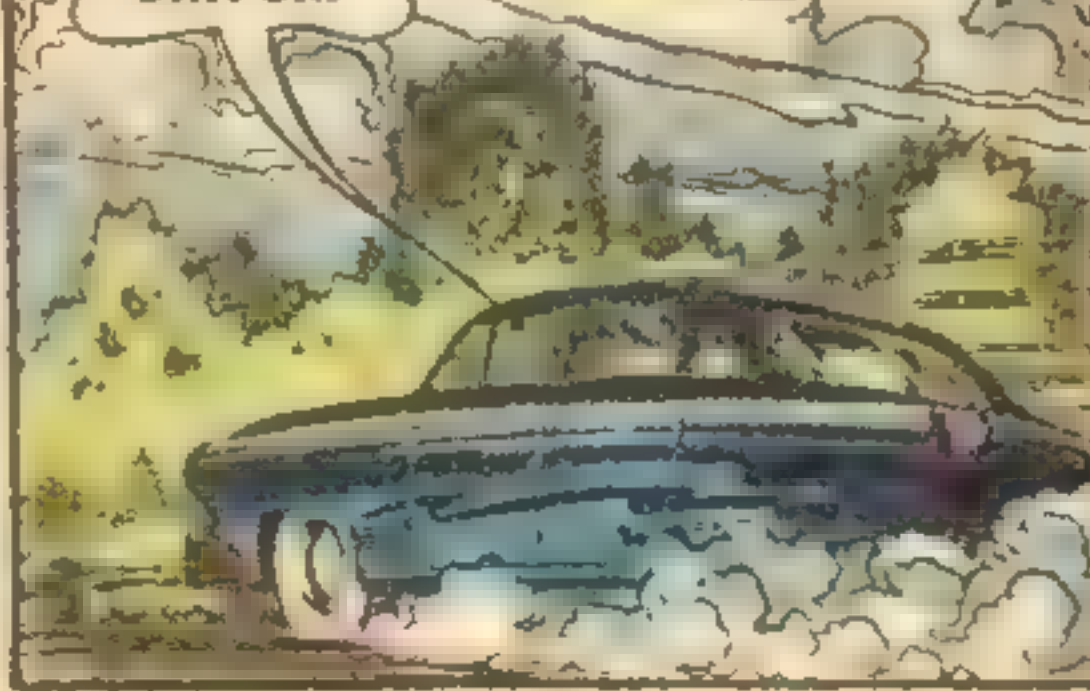
YOU'LL COME DOWN AND SEE ME PLAY, BOB? TWO WEEKS FROM TOMORROW... AT THE N.W.A.A. COURSE IN SPRINGDALE. I'LL BE AT THE HOTEL! I'VE RESERVED A DOUBLE ROOM!

OF COURSE, HONEY! YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T MISS MY WIFE'S CAPTURING THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL AMATEUR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP!



BOB CHUCKLED AS HE DROVE OFF...

MY ATHLETIC WOMEN. LITTLE DID I KNOW, WHEN I SUGGESTED TO AMY THAT SHE TAKE UP GOLF WHILE I WAS AWAY ON THE ROAD, THAT SHE'D BECOME SUCH AN EXPERT GOLFER. NOW SHE'S ENTERED IN THE N.W.A.A. CHAMPIONSHIPS...



THE CAR ROARED NORTH THROUGH SMALL TOWNS AND OVER MILES OF HIGHWAYS UNTIL, THE NEXT NIGHT

BOB, HONEY! I THOUGHT YOU'D BE BACK TONIGHT! I CAME HOME FROM PRACTICE EARLY...

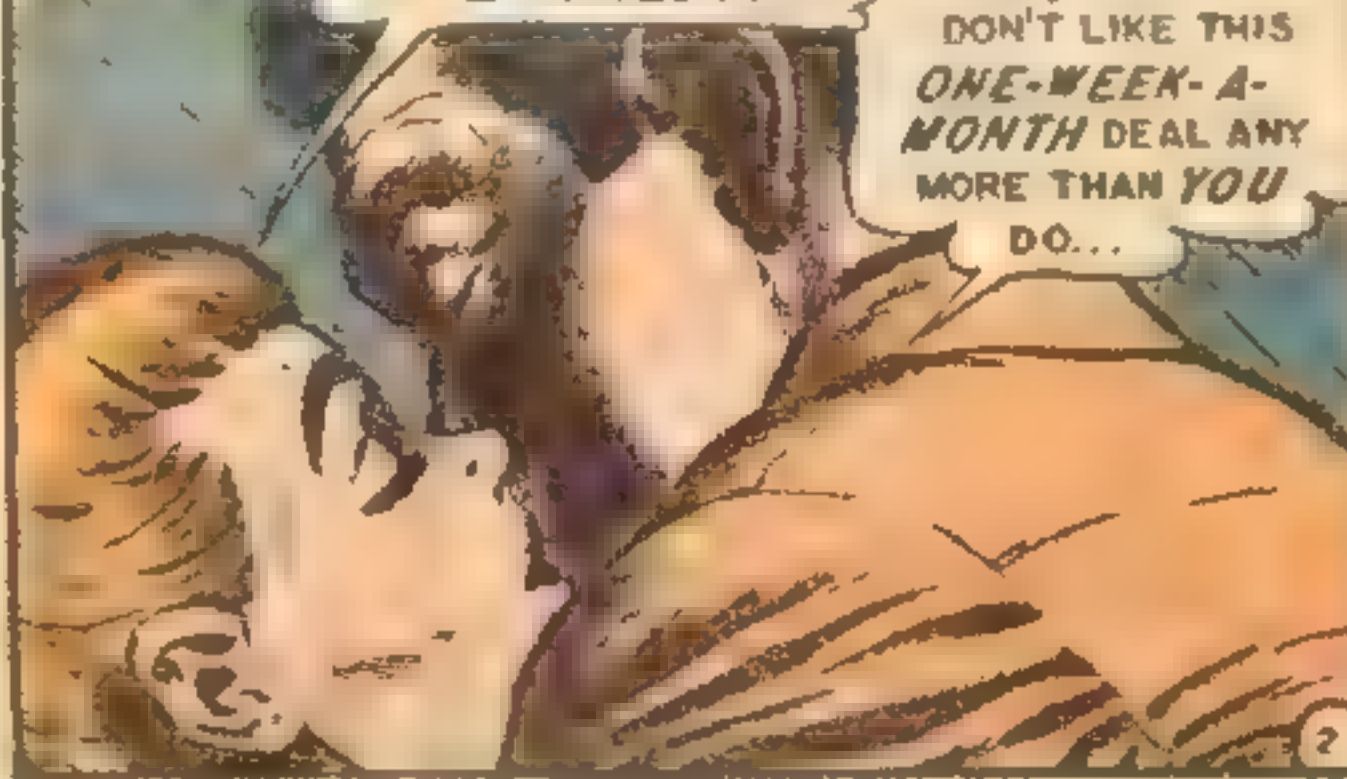
JEAN, BABY!



SHE TOSSED HER BOOK TO THE FLOOR AND HE WAS IN HER ARMS. JEAN WAS HEAVIER THAN AMY. MORE MUSCULAR. HER HAIR FELL IN SOFT GOLDEN TRESSES ABOUT HER BARE SHOULDERS...

OH, DARLING! I MISSED YOU! I MISSED YOU!

AND I MISSED YOU, JEAN. I DON'T LIKE THIS ONE-WEEK-A-MONTH DEAL ANY MORE THAN YOU DO...

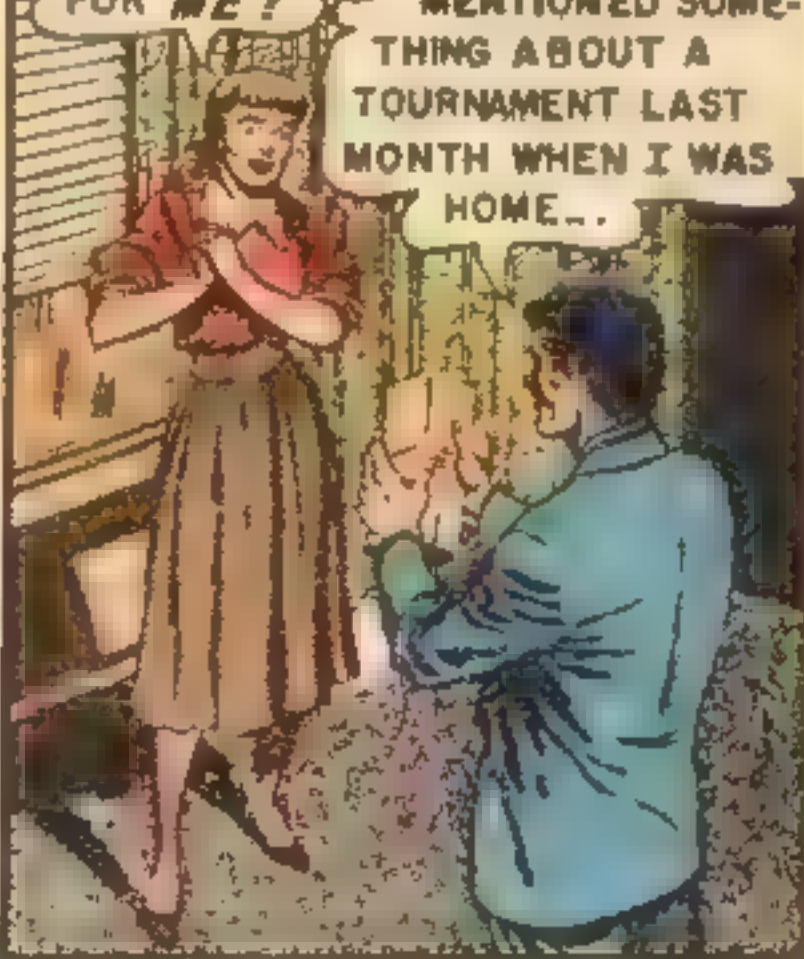


HEH, HEH! WELL, KIDDIES, THAT'S THE PICTURE LOVER BOY COMMUTED BETWEEN WIVES. ONE WEEK WITH SLIM, SWEET AMY... ONE WEEK WITH BUXOM JEAN. FOR THREE YEARS, THIS LITTLE RACKET HAD BEEN GOING ON. AMY TOOK UP GOLF WHILE ROBERT DARLING WAS ON THE ROAD. KNOW WHAT JEAN TOOK UP? READ ON...



THE WEEK WAS OVER. JEAN AND BOB WERE SAYING GOOD-BYE...

WHAT IS IT, BOB? **DON'T OPEN A SURPRISE... FOR ME?** **IT, JEAN! YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT A TOURNAMENT LAST MONTH WHEN I WAS HOME...**



YES THE **N.W.A.A. BOWLING TOURNAMENT**. IT'S NEXT WEEK. I'VE **QUALIFIED...**

WELL, AFTER YOU **GET** THERE, THEN OPEN IT. MAYBE IT'LL HELP YOU **WIN**.



YES, JEAN HAD TAKEN UP **BOWLING**. ROBERT HAD SUGGESTED IT. AND LIKE AMY, JEAN HAD PROVEN HERSELF VERY ADEPT AT **HER CHOSEN SPORT...**

JUST THINK! MY **WIFE A CHAMPION BOWLER.**

YOU **WILL** COME DOWN AND **SEE ME BOWL** NEXT WEEK, **WON'T YOU, HONEY?**



OF **COURSE, JEAN. WHERE'D YOU SAY IT WAS?**

SPRINGDALE! THE **N.W.A.A.'S ALLEYS** THERE...

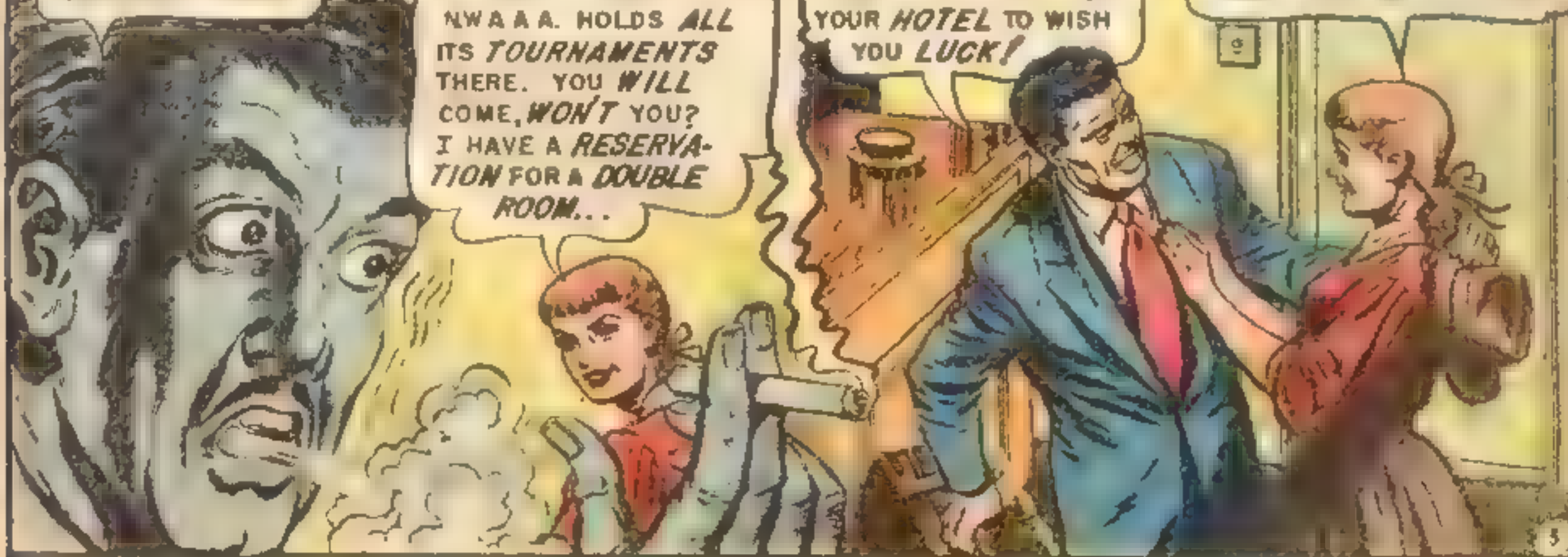


SPRINGDALE!? BUT... BUT I **THOUGHT** THERE WAS A **GOLF COURSE** THERE

THERE **IS**. AND **TENNIS COURTS**. AND A **POOL**. THE **N.W.A.A. HOLDS ALL ITS TOURNAMENTS** THERE. YOU **WILL** COME, **WON'T YOU?** I HAVE A **RESERVATION** FOR A **DOUBLE ROOM...**

WELL I'LL **TRY** TO MAKE IT, HONEY. AT LEAST I'LL **STOP BY** YOUR **HOTEL** TO WISH YOU **LUCK!**

OH, DARLING I'LL MAKE YOU SO PROUD OF ME NOW... **KISS ME GOOD-BYE.**



BOB SPED OFF. HEH, HEH. SO BOTH MY ATHLETIC WOMEN WILL BE IN THE SAME TOWN AT THE SAME TIME. WELL... THIS OUGHT TO BE FUN. I'M LUCKY THAT 'SMITH' IS A COMMON NAME. AMY AND JEAN WILL NEVER SUSPECT ANYTHING, AND IF I WORK IT RIGHT... NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER.



HMMM. SPRINGDALE PROBABLY HAS ONLY ONE HOTEL. THEY'LL BOTH BE THERE. YES, SIR! THIS IS GOING TO BE FUN!



BUT THEN, HAVEN'T THE LAST THREE YEARS?!



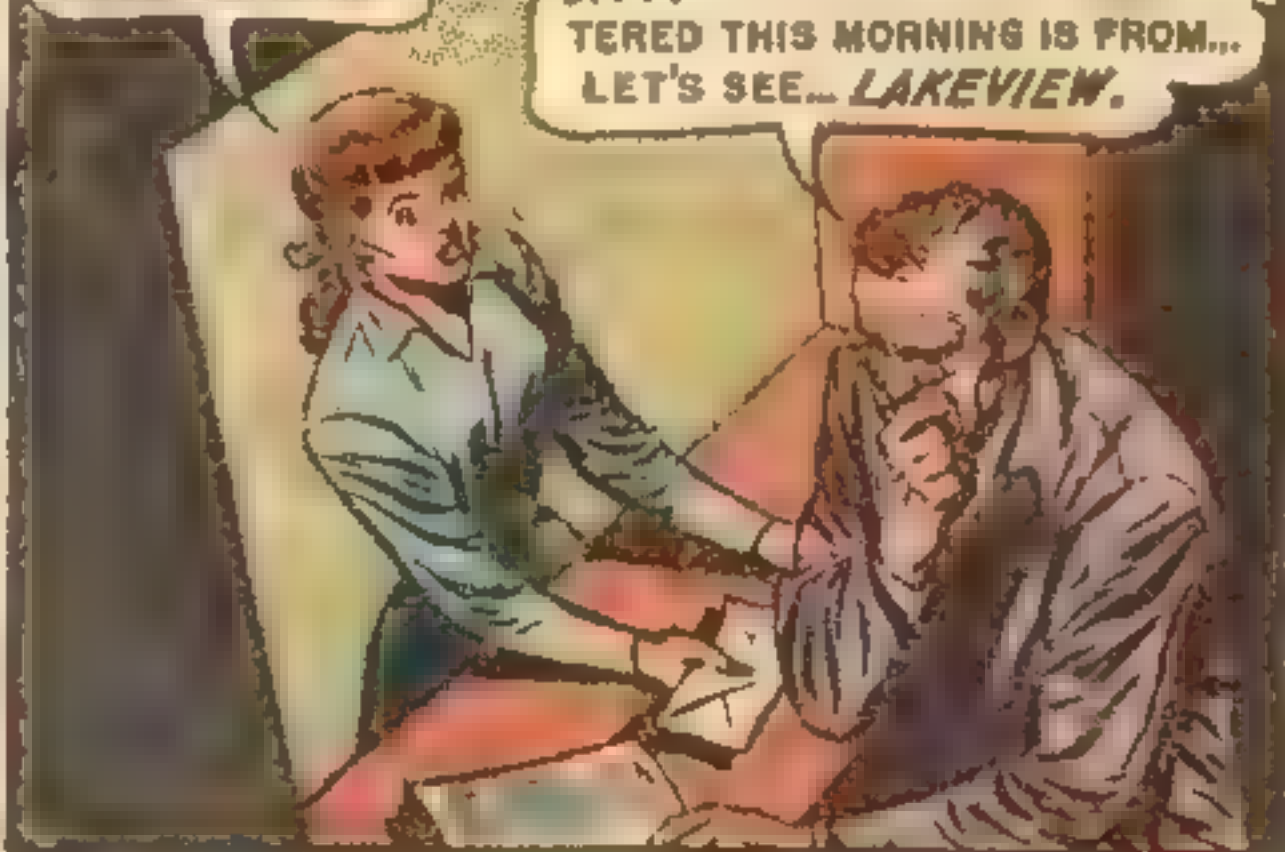
SPRINGDALE'S ONE HOTEL WAS A BUSTLE OF EXCITEMENT ON THE FIRST DAY OF TOURNAMENT WEEK. THE LOBBY WAS JAMMED...

SORRY. NO ROOMS. ALL FILLED UP. SORRY... YOU HAVE A RESERVATION FOR ME... MRS. ROBERT SMITH! HUH? WHY... MRS. ROBERT SMITH CHECKED IN THIS MORNING?



BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. I'M MRS. ROBERT SMITH. HERE'S YOUR LETTER ACKNOWLEDGING MY RESERVATION...

OH, DEAR. THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE. OBVIOUSLY THERE ARE TWO MRS. ROBERT SMITHS. I SEE YOU'RE FROM CENTER CITY! THE ONE THAT REGISTERED THIS MORNING IS FROM... LET'S SEE... LAKEVIEW.



LAKEVIEW? DID I HEAR SOMEONE MENTION LAKEVIEW, THAT'S MY...

OH, MRS. SMITH. I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE. THERE'S BEEN A TERRIBLE ERROR. LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MRS. ROBERT SMITH.

SEEMS WE HAVE THE SAME NAME, HONEY... AND THE SAME ROOM RESERVATION...

LADIES! I HAVE A BRILLIANT IDEA! WHY DON'T YOU TWO SHARE THE ROOM? I SEE THAT IT'S A DOUBLE...

WELL, MY HUSBAND IS COMING DOWN TO SEE ME PLAY...

SO'S MINE. BUT WE COULD DOUBLE UP UNTIL THEY STRAIGHTEN THIS MESS OUT...



OH, YES! WE'LL
FIX THINGS UP.
THIS IS ALL
OUR FAULT.

C'MON,
HONEY! MY
NAME'S
AMY!
WHAT'S
YOURS?

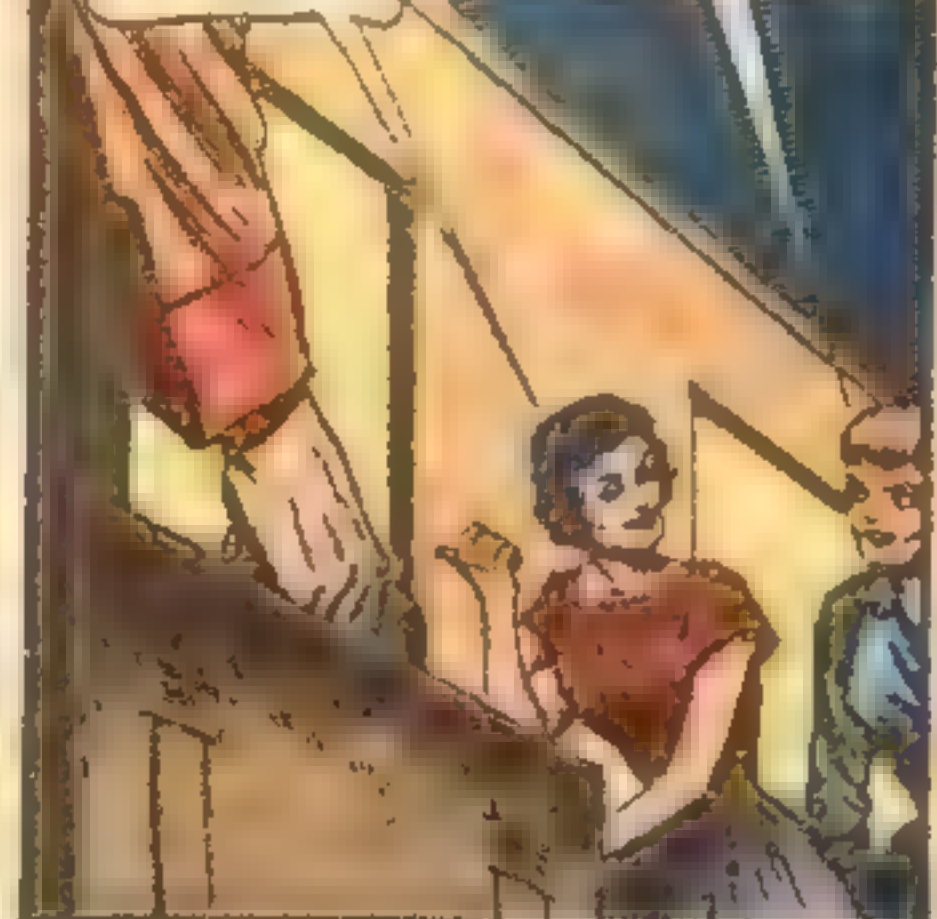
JEAN!
I
BOWL...

I PLAY GOLF.
ER...BOY!
TAKE THESE
BAGS TO
ROOM 204.

ISN'T IT A COIN-
CIDENCE... I MEAN
US HAVING THE
SAME MARRIED
NAME!

WELL, HONEY...
ROBERT SMITH
IS AN AWFULLY
COMMON NAME!
IN HERE...

I GUESS SO.
MY BOB IS
A TRAVELING
SALESMAN...

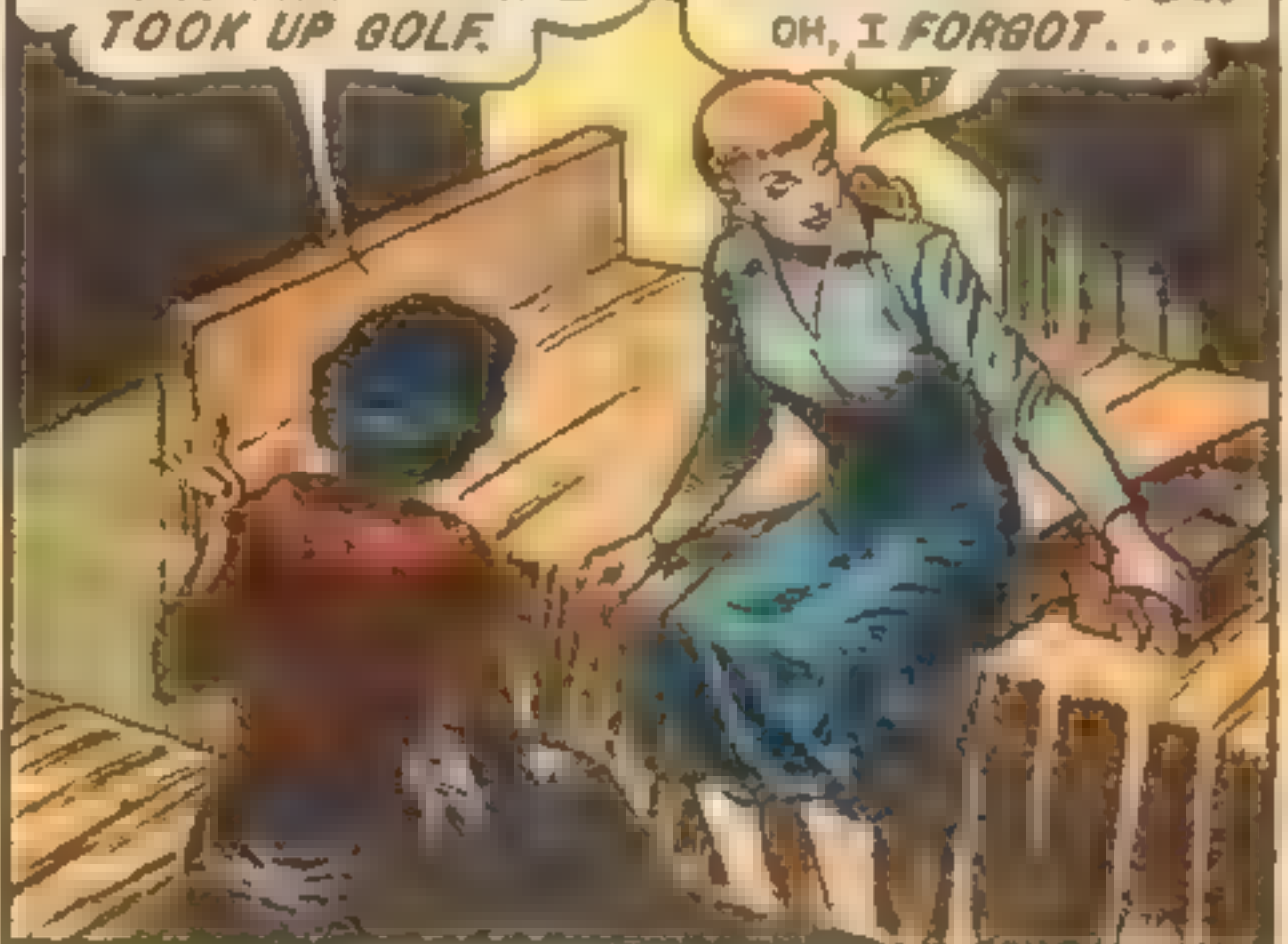
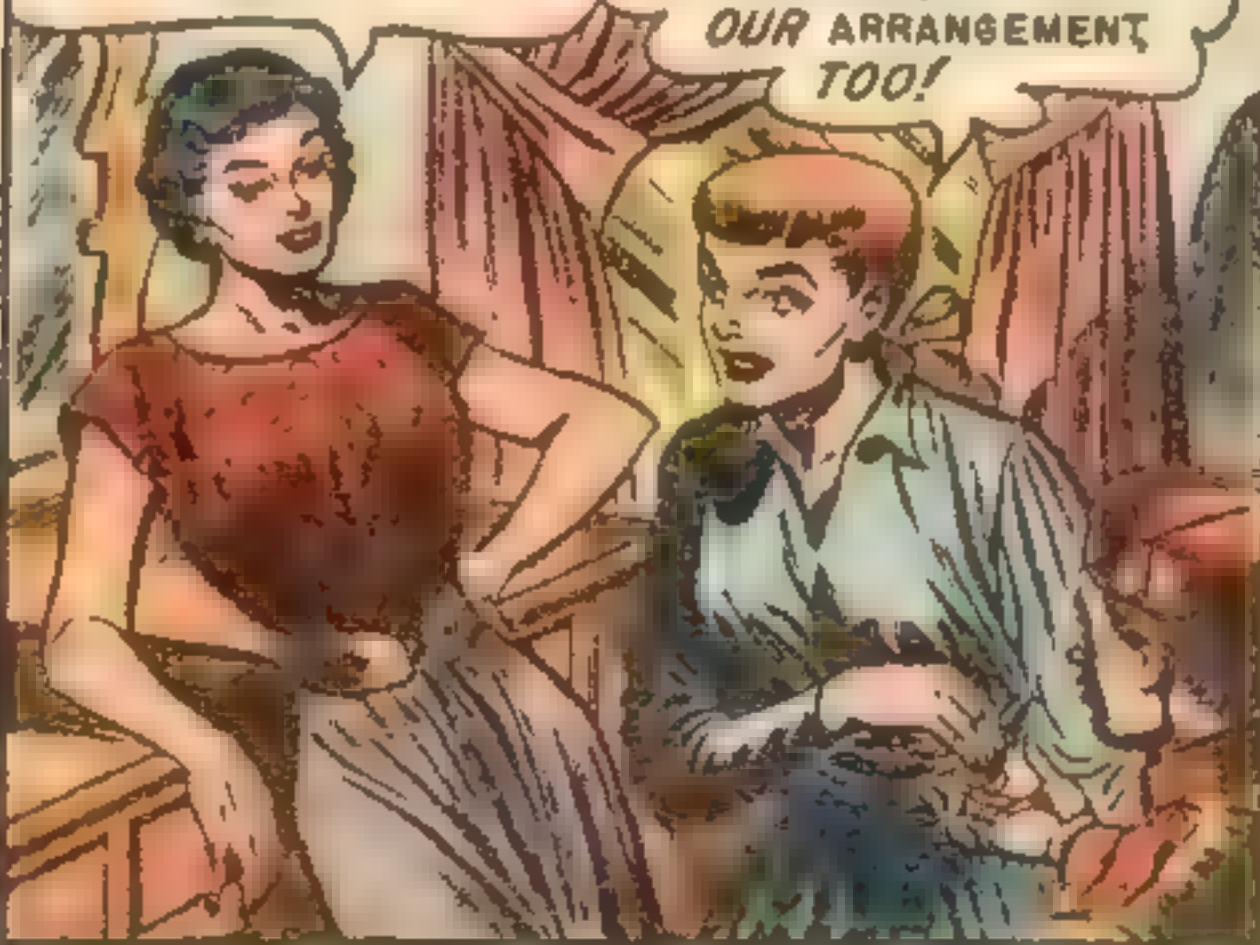


HE IS? SO'S MINE! I
HARDLY SEE HIM! ONLY
ONE WEEK A MONTH!

HERE, BOY! THANKS.
DID YOU SAY ONE WEEK
A MONTH? THAT'S
OUR ARRANGEMENT,
TOO!

I GUESS ALL TRAVELING
SALESMEN'S WIVES HAVE IT
ROUGH. THAT'S WHY I
TOOK UP GOLF.

SAME HERE... WITH
MY BOWLING. IT GAVE
ME SOMETHING TO DO!
OH, I FORGOT...



MY HUSBAND GAVE ME THIS
PACKAGE. IT'S A SUR-
PRISE. I WAS SUPPOSED
TO OPEN IT WHEN I
GOT HERE...

THAT'S FUNNY! I
HAVE ONE, TOO! HERE!
SEE?

THE TWO GIRLS STRUGGLED WITH THEIR PACKAGES...
TEARING THEM OPEN NERVOUSLY.

WHAT THE...?

GOOD LORD!



AMY STARED AT THE SHOES WITH THE ONE RUBBER SOLE AND THE ONE FATHER ONE

THESE...THESE ARE BOWLING SHOES...



JEAN STARED AT HER GIFT.. SHOES WITH METAL CLEATS...

AND... THESE ARE GOLF SHOES...



THEN IT DAWNED UPON THEM THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER ..

BUT... BUT I PLAY GOLF!

AND I... BOWL!



IN SILENCE THEY EACH RUMMAGED THROUGH THEIR SUITCASES, TOSSING CLOTHES ASIDE ..



AND WHEN THEY EACH FOUND WHAT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR, THEY HELD THE TWO PHOTOGRAPHS UP... COMPARING THEM



SO THEY WAITED FOR ROBERT TOGETHER

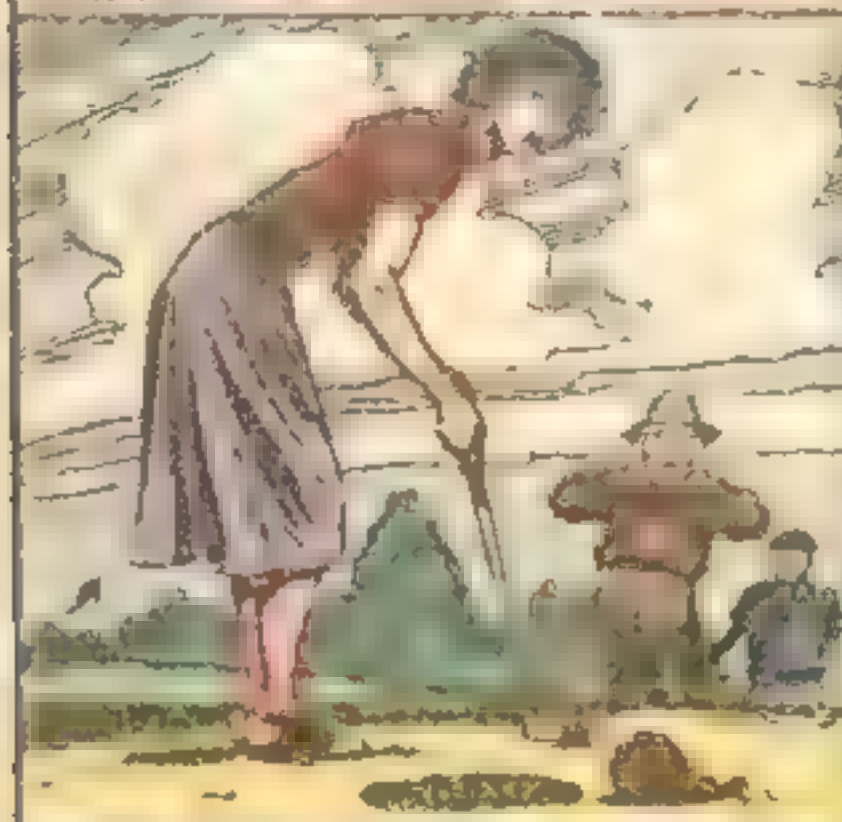
WHAT THE

HELLO, BOB!

COME IN... OUR HUSBAND!



THE NEXT MORNING WHEN THE TOURNAMENT STARTED, THE JUDGES FOUND AMY ON THE FIRST GREEN OF THE GOLF COURSE HER HAIR STRINGY, HER FACE PALE, GLEEFULLY PRACTICING HER PUTTING



AMY WAS USING ROBERT'S EYEBALLS...

AND THEY FOUND JEAN AT THE ALLEYS WHEN THEY CAME TO OPEN THEM UP. SHE WAS PRACTICING HER BOWLING...



JEAN WAS USING ROBERT'S EYELESS HEAD

HEH, HEH. AND THE MORAL OF THE STORY, KIDDIES, IS DON'T BE A MASHIE AND SPOON WITH A SPARE WIFE OR YOU'LL STRIKE OUT IN THE LAST FRAME. AND NOBODY WILL YELL FOUL, BECAUSE ONE WIFE IS FAR FOR THE COURSE SO IF YOU FEEL LIKE PINNING YOURSELF DOWN, DON'T SPLIT YOUR AFFECTIONS ONE BAG IS ENOUGH FOR ANY DUFFER! HEH, HEH! AND

NOW, THE OLD WITCH AWAITS TO WIND UP MY TERROR-MAG. 'BYE, NOW. REMEMBER. OLD GOLFERS NEVER DIE...



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEP IT'S YOUR DIETILIAN OF DISGUSTING DRAMA. THE OLD WITCH, READY TO STIR UP ANOTHER STENCH SNACK IN MY CAULDRON HERE IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR SO COME IN, KIDDIES, AND SIT DOWN BY THE FIRE. THIS TIME, MY MENU CONSISTS OF ANOTHER ADAPTION OF A TALE BY MY BOY, BRADBURY REVOLTING RAY, AS I AFFECTIONATELY CALL HIM. LISTEN TO MY BRADBURY'S SUPERB.

THE HANDLER

MR. BENEDICT WALKED DOWN THE STEPS AND OUT THE GATE, WITHOUT ONCE LOOKING AT HIS LITTLE MORTUARY BUILDING. HE SAVED THAT PLEASURE FOR LATER. IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THINGS TOOK THE RIGHT PRECEDENCE. IT WOULDN'T PAY TO THINK WITH JOY OF THE BODIES AWAITING HIS TALENTS IN THE MORTUARY BUILDING. NO, IT WAS BETTER TO FOLLOW HIS USUAL DAY AFTER DAY ROUTINE. HE WOULD LET THE CONFLICT BEGIN...



MR. BENEDICT KNEW JUST WHERE TO GET HIMSELF ENRAGED. HE SPOKE WITH MR. RODGERS, THE DRUGGIST, AND HE SAVED AND PUT AWAY ALL THE SLURS AND INTONATIONS AND INSULTS.



THERE YOU ARE, YOU GOLD ONE!

COLD ONE! HA, HA!

MR. RODGERS ALWAYS HAD SOME TERRIBLE THING TO SAY ABOUT A MAN IN THE FUNERAL PROFESSION, AND OUTSIDE THE DRUG-STORE, MR. BENEDICT MET UP WITH MR. STUYVESANT, THE CONTRACTOR

OH, HELLO, BENEDICT. HOW'S *BUSINESS*? I'LL BET YOU'RE GOING AT IT *TOOTH AND NAIL*, DID YOU GET IT? I SAID *TOOTH AND...*

YES, YES' AND HOW'S *YOUR BUSINESS*, MR. STUYVESANT?



AND ON IT WENT, PERSON AFTER PERSON...

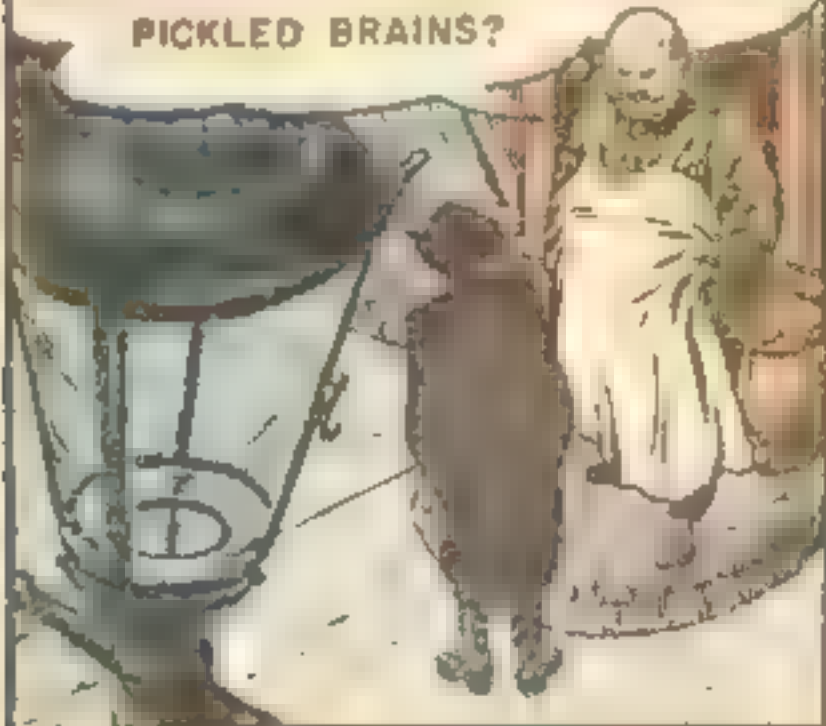
SAY, HOW DO YOUR HANDS GET SO *COLD*, BENEDICT, OLD MAN? THAT'S A *COLD SHAKE* YOU GOT THERE. YOU JUST GET DONE EMBALMING A *FRIGID WOMAN*? HEH, THAT'S *NOT BAD*. YOU HEARD WHAT I SAID?

GOOD, GOOD! WELL...GOOD DAY!



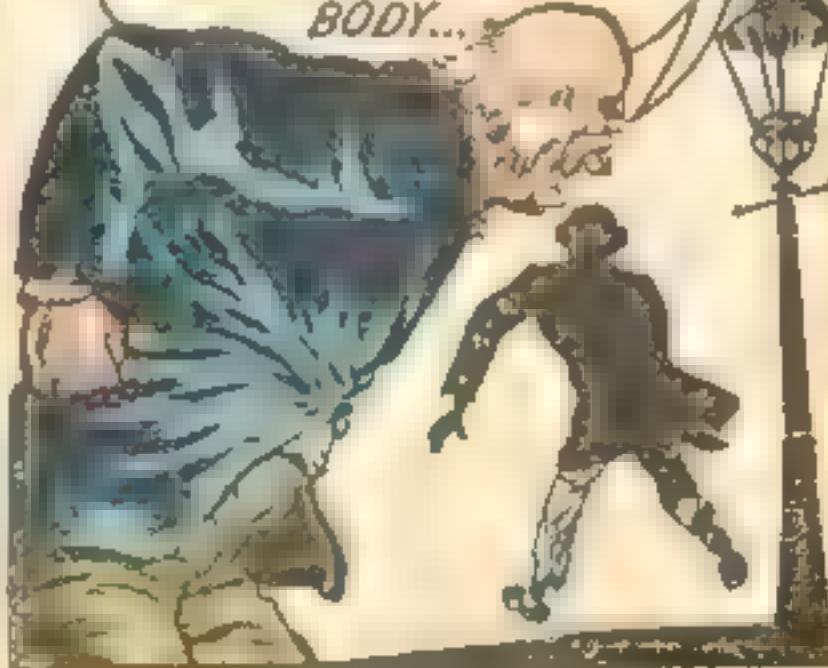
MR. BENEDICT WAS THE LAKE INTO WHICH ALL REFUSE WAS THROWN. PEOPLE BEGAN WITH PEBBLES, AND WHEN MR. BENEDICT DID NOT RIPPLE, THEY HEAVED A STONE... A BRICK... A BOULDER...

THERE YOU ARE, MEAT CHOPPER! HOW ARE ALL YOUR CORNED-BEEFS AND PICKLED BRAINS?



THAT WAS MR. FLINGER, THE DELICATESSEN MAN. THERE WERE MORE, MANY MORE. THINGS WORKED TO A CRESCENDO. FINALLY, MR. BENEDICT TURNED WILDLY AND RAN BACK THROUGH TOWN. HE WAS ALL READY NOW...

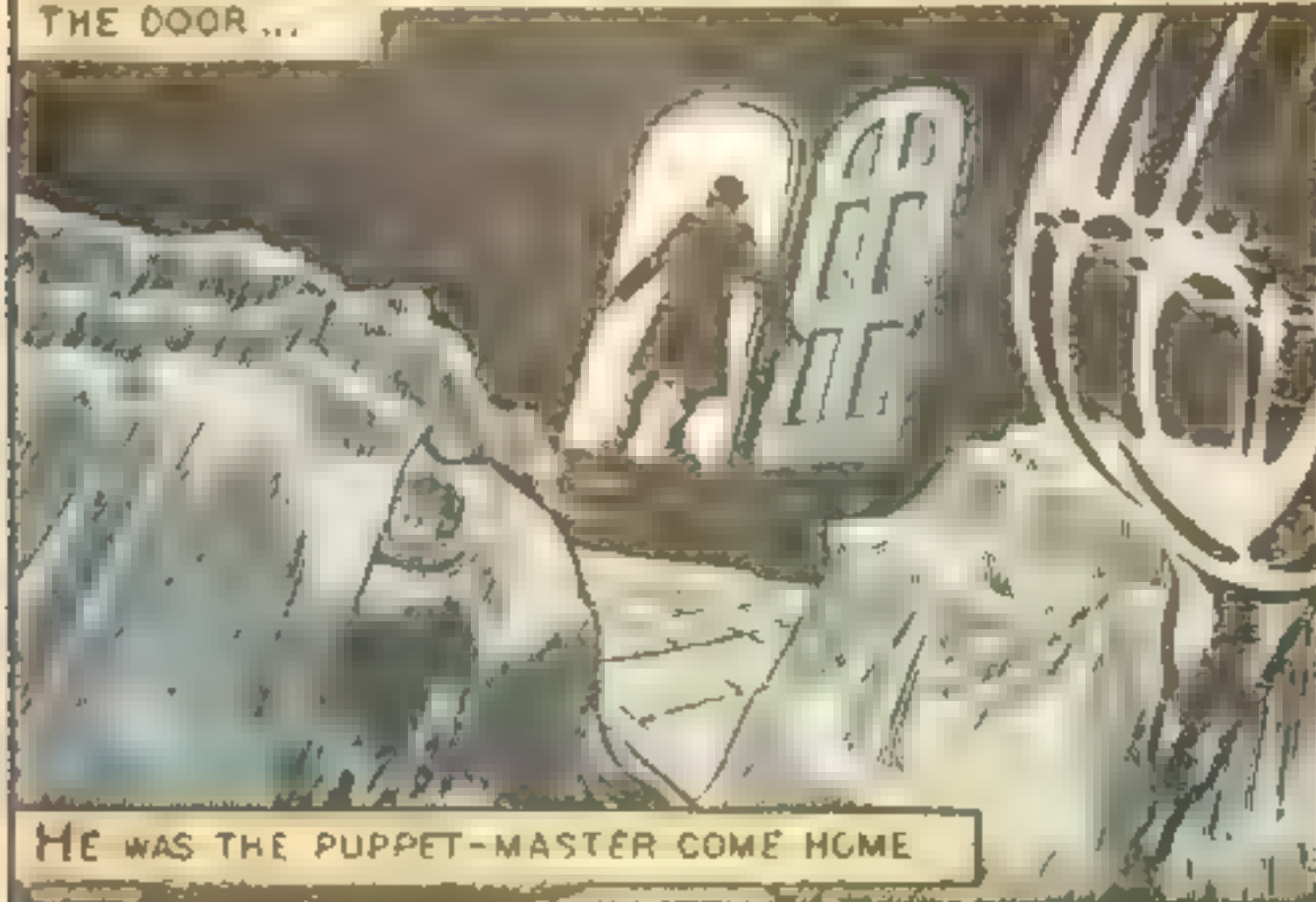
SOME BODY WAITIN' ON YOU, MR. BENEDICT? HEY! GET IT? I SAID SOME BODY...



THE AWFUL PART OF THE DAY WAS OVER... THE GOOD PART WAS NOW TO BEGIN! HE RAN EAGERLY UP THE STEPS OF HIS MORTUARY.



THE ROOM WAITED LIKE A FALL OF SNOW THERE WERE WHITE HUMMOCKS AND PALE DELINEATIONS OF THINGS RECUMBENT UNDER SHEETS IN THE DARKNESS. MR. BENEDICT FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR...



HE WAS THE PUPPET-MASTER COME HOME

HE STOOD FOR A LONG MINUTE IN THE VERY CENTER OF HIS THEATER. IN HIS HEAD APPLAUSE, PERHAPS, THUNDERED. THEN HE CAREFULLY REMOVED HIS COAT, GOT INTO A FRESH WHITE SMOCK, AND RUBBED HIS HANDS TOGETHER AS HE LOOKED AT HIS VERY GOOD FRIENDS...

HEH...HEH. HEH...



HE WALKED ALONG THE SLEEPING ROWS OF SHEETED PEOPLE. IT HAD BEEN A FINE WEEK; THERE WERE ANY NUMBER OF FAMILY RELICS LYING THERE. HE NOTED EACH NAME ON ITS WHITE CARD...

MRS. WALTERS. MR. SMITH. MISS BROWN. MR. ANDREWS. AH, GOOD AFTERNOON, ONE AND ALL!



MR. BENEDICT LIFTED A SHEET AS IF LOOKING FOR A CHILD UNDER A BED...

HOW ARE YOU TODAY, MRS. SHELLMUND? YOU'RE LOOKING **SPLENDID**, DEAR LADY!



MR. BENEDICT PULLED UP A CHAIR AND REGARDED MRS. SHELLMUND THROUGH A MAGNIFYING GLASS...

MY DEAR MRS. SHELLMUND. DO YOU REALIZE, MY LADY, THAT YOU HAVE A **SEBACEOUS CONDITION** OF THE PORES? OIL AND **GREASE PIMPLES**. A RICH, RICH **DIET** WAS YOUR TROUBLE. TOO MANY **FROSTIES** AND **SPONGIE CAKES** AND **CREAM CANDIES**. YOU ALWAYS **PRIDED** YOURSELF ON YOUR **BRAIN**, MRS. SHELLMUND...



BUT YOU **KEPT** THAT WONDERFUL PRICELESS BRAIN OF YOURS AFLOAT IN **PARFAITS** AND **FIZZES** AND **LIMEADES** AND **SODAS** AND WERE SO VERY **SUPERIOR** TO ME THAT **NOW**, MRS. SHELLMUND, HERE IS WHAT SHALL **HAPPEN**...



MR. BENEDICT DID A NEAT OPERATION ON HER. CUTTING THE SCALP IN A CIRCLE, HE LIFTED IT OFF, THEN LIFTED OUT THE BRAIN. THEN HE PREPARED A CAKE CONFECTIONERS LITTLE SUGAR-BELLOWS AND SQUIRTED HER EMPTY HEAD FULL OF WHIPPED CREAM AND CRYSTAL RIBBONS, STARS AND FROLIPS, IN PINK, WHITE AND GREEN, AND ON TOP HE PRINTED A FINE PINK SCROLL...



THEN HE PUT THE SKULL BACK ON AND SEWED IT IN PLACE AND HID THE MARKS WITH WAX AND POWDER AND WALKED ON TO THE NEXT TABLE...

GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. WREN. AND HOW IS THE **MASTER OF RACIAL HATREDS** TODAY? **PURE, WHITE LAUNDERED** MR. WREN. **CLEAN AS SNOW, WHITE AS LINEN**. THE MAN WHO HATED **JEWS** AND **NEGROES**. DO YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO **DO** TO YOU, MR. WREN? FIRST, LET US DRAW YOUR **BLOOD** FROM YOU, **INTOLERANT FRIEND**!

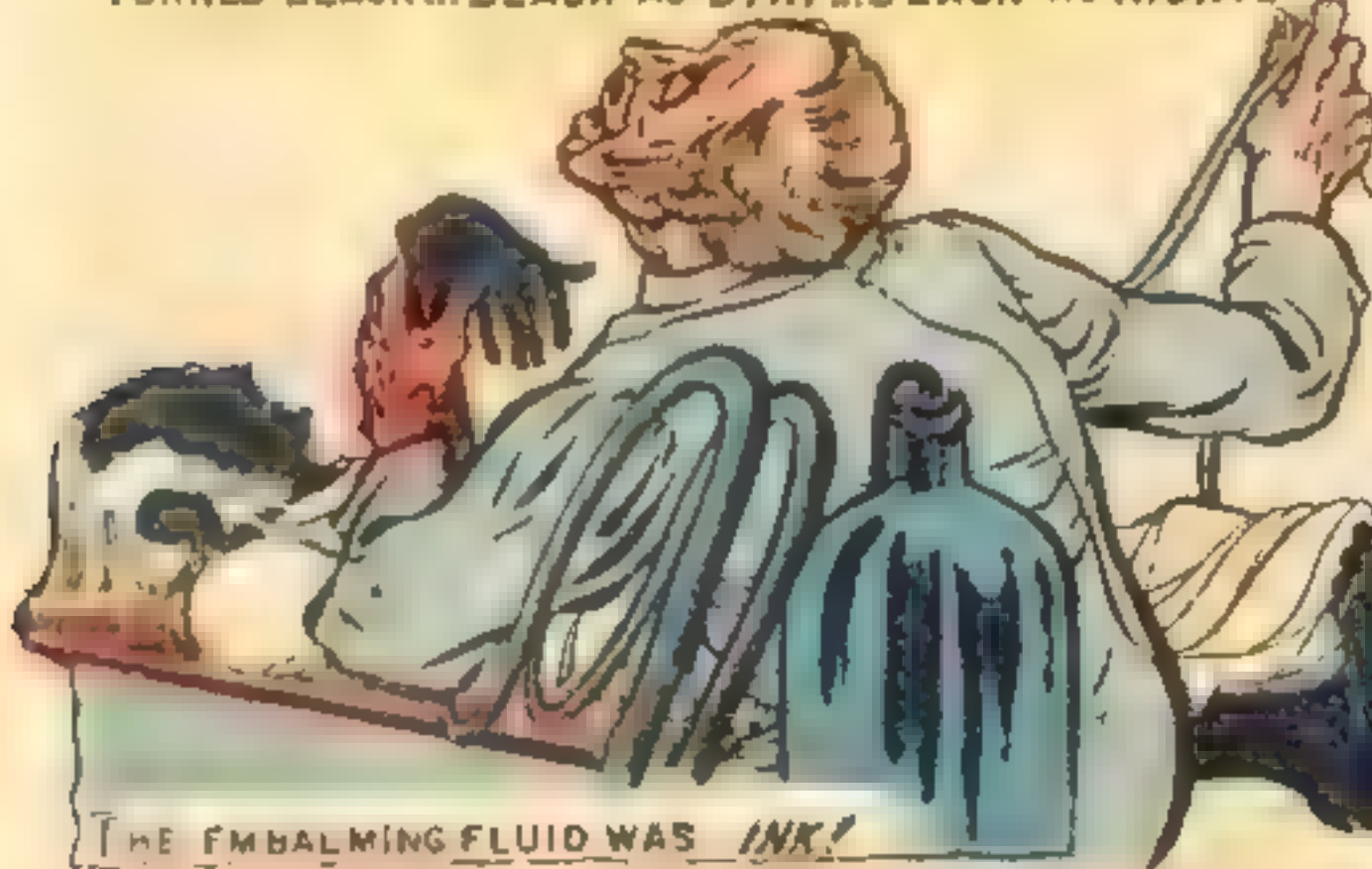


THE BLOOD WAS DRAWN OFF...

NOW... THE INJECTION OF, YOU MIGHT SAY, **EMBALMING FLUID**.



MR. WREN, SNOW-WHITE, LINEN PURE, LAY WITH THE FLUID GOING IN HIM. MR. BENEDICT LAUGHED. MR. WREN TURNED BLACK... *BLACK AS DIRT... BLACK AS NIGHT.*



THE EMBALMING FLUID WAS *INK!*

MR. BENEDICT MOVED ON

AND HELLO TO YOU, EDMUND WORTH. WHAT A HANDSOME BODY YOU HAD. POWERFUL, WITH MUSCLES PINNED FROM HUGE BONE TO HUGE BONE, AND A CHEST LIKE A BOULDER. WOMEN GREW SPEECHLESS WHEN YOU WALKED BY... MEN STARED WITH ENVY! AND NOW, HERE YOU ARE..



MR. BENEDICT SEVERED WORTH'S HEAD PUT IT IN A COFFIN ON A SMALL PILLOW FACING UP, THEN HE PLACED ONE HUNDRED NINETY POUNDS OF BRICKS IN THE COFFIN AND ARRANGED THEM TO LOOK LIKE A BODY. IT WAS A FINE ILLUSION...



SINCE IT WAS A GROWING AND POPULAR HABIT IN THE TOWN FOR PEOPLE TO BE BURIED WITH THE COFFIN LIDS CLOSED OVER THEM DURING THE SERVICE, THIS GAVE MR. BENEDICT GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO VENT HIS REPRESSIONS ON HIS HAPLESS GUESTS. HE HAD THE MOST UTTERLY WONDERFUL FUN WITH A GROUP OF OLD MAIDEN LADIES WHO WERE MASHED IN AN AUTO ON THEIR WAY TO AN AFTER-NOON TEA. THEY WERE FAMOUS GOSSIPS, ALWAYS WITH HEADS TOGETHER OVER SOME CHOICE BIT. AS IN LIFE, ALL THREE WERE CROWDED INTO ONE CASKET, HEADS TOGETHER IN ETERNAL GOLD PETRIFIED GOSSIP



THE OTHER TWO CASKETS WERE FILLED WITH PEBBLES AND SHELLS AND RAVELS OF GINGHAM. IT WAS A TRIFLE, BUT EVERYBODY CRIED..



THOSE THREE INSEPARABLES, AT LAST SEPARATED!

HEH, HEH

NOT LACKING FOR A SENSE OF JUSTICE, MR. BENEDICT BURIED ONE RICH MAN STARK NAKED



A POOR MAN HE BURIED WOUND IN GOLD CLOTH, WITH FIVE DOLLAR GOLD PIECES FOR BUTTONS AND TWENTY DOLLAR GOLD COINS ON EACH EYELID..



A LAWYER HE DID NOT BURY AT ALL,
BUT BURNT HIM IN THE INCINERATOR...



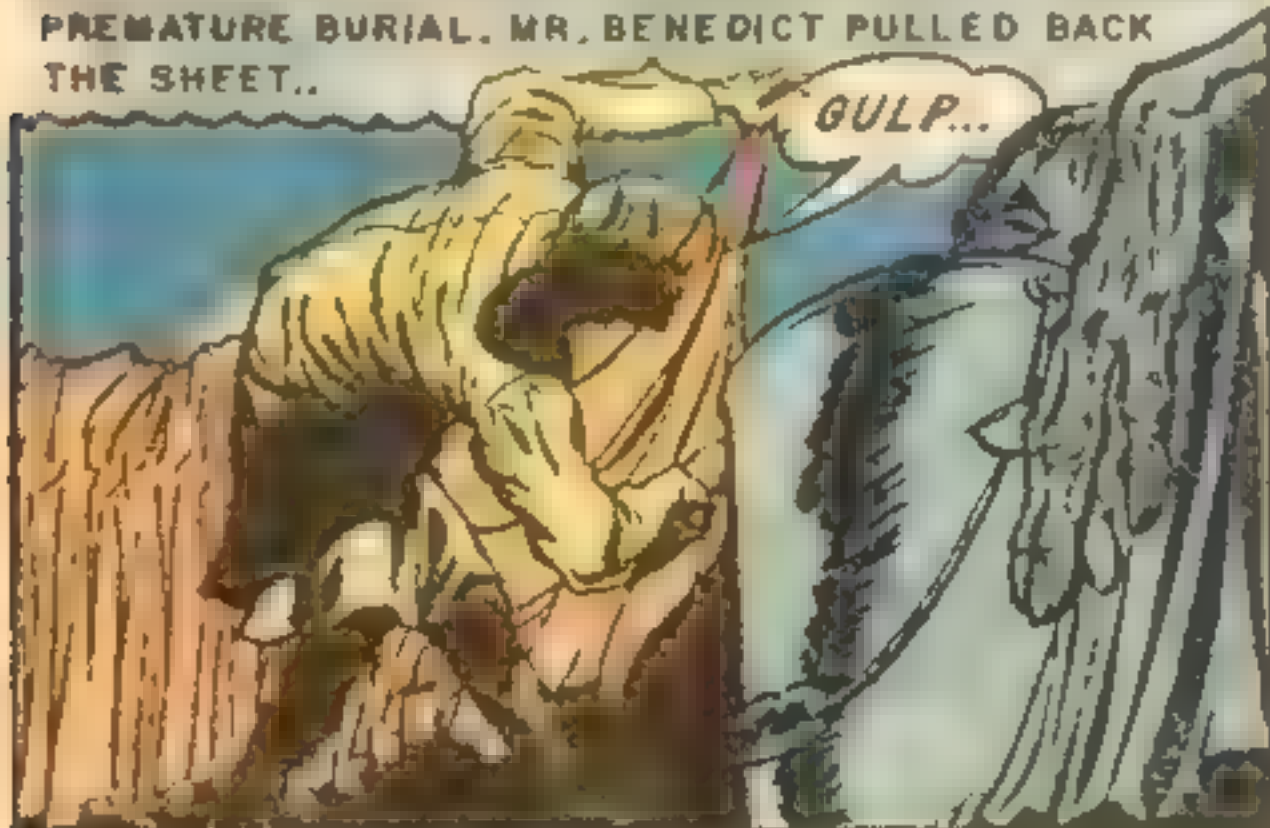
HIS COFFIN CONTAINED NOTHING
BUT A POLE-CAT, TRAPPED IN THE
WOODS ONE SUNDAY.



AN OLD MAID WAS THE VICTIM OF
A TERRIBLE DEVICE. UNDER THE
SILKEN COMFORTER, PARTS OF AN
OLD MAN HAD BEEN BURIED WITH
HER. THERE SHE LAY BEING MADE
COLD LOVE TO BY HIDDEN HANDS
AND THINGS. THE SHOCK
SHOWED ON HER FACE,
SOMEWHAT...



SO MR. BENEDICT MOVED FROM BODY TO BODY IN HIS
MORTUARY. THE FINAL BODY OF THE DAY WAS THE
BODY OF ONE MERRIWELL BLYTHE, AN ANCIENT MAN
AFFLICTED WITH SPELLS AND COMAS. MR. BLYTHE
HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN FOR DEAD SEVERAL TIMES,
BUT EACH TIME HE HAD REVIVED IN TIME TO PREVENT
PREMATURE BURIAL. MR. BENEDICT PULLED BACK
THE SHEET...



GULP...

MR. BENEDICT FELL AGAINST THE SLAB, SUDDENLY
SHAKEN AND SICK...

YOU'RE...
ALIVE!

YOU! GET ME UP FROM HERE! OH, THE
THINGS I'VE HEARD, THE THINGS I'VE
LISTENED TO THE LAST HOUR. LYING
HERE, NOT BEING ABLE TO MOVE AND
HEARING YOU TALK THE THINGS YOU
TALK!



THE OLD MAN ON THE SLAB WAILED, ROLLING HIS EYES
ABOUT IN HIS HEAD IN WHITE ORBITS...

OH, YOU DARK DARK THING, YOU *AWFUL* THING, YOU
FIEND, YOU *MONSTER*, GET ME UP FROM HERE! I'LL
TELL THE *MAYOR* AND THE *COUNCIL* AND *EVERYONE*,
OH, YOU *DARK DARK THING*! YOU *DEFILER* AND
SADIST, YOU *PERVERTED SCOUNDREL*. YOU
TERRIBLE MAN...

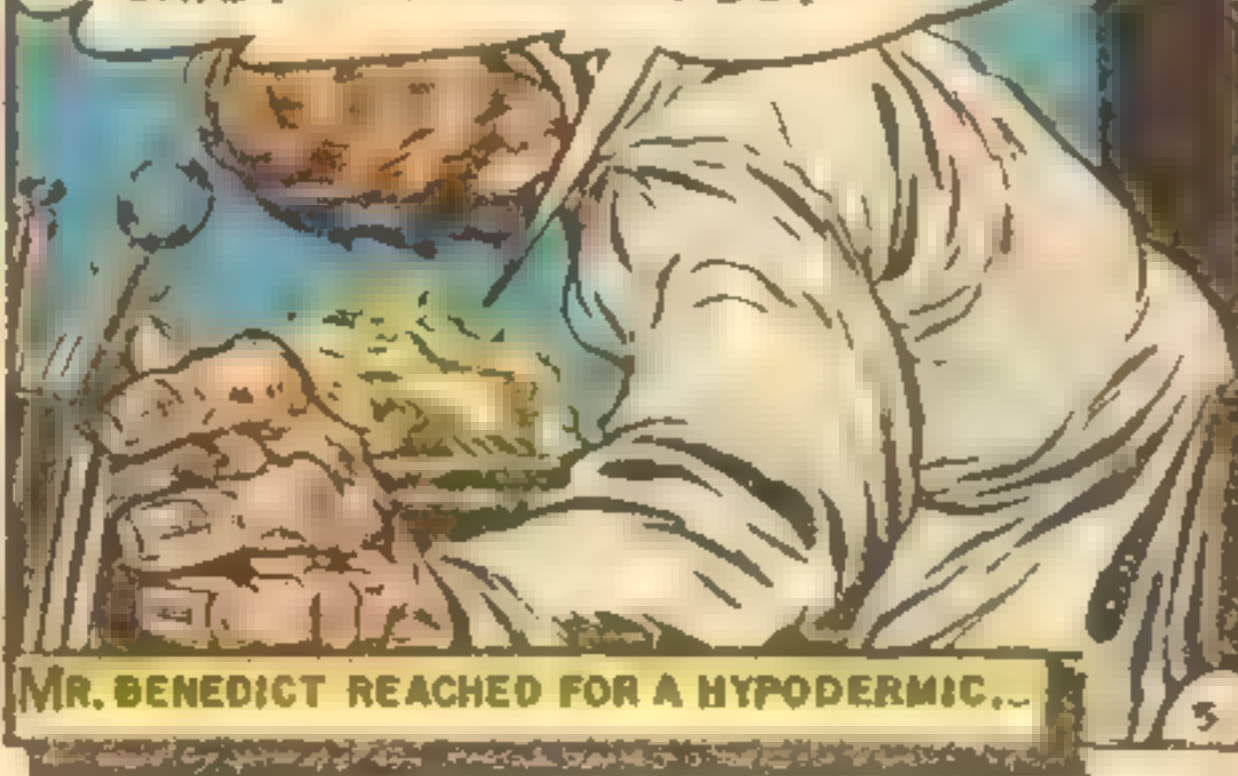
NO...



THE OLD MAN SHRIEKED, FROTHING...

TO THINK THIS HAS GONE ON IN OUR TOWN
ALL THESE YEARS AND WE NEVER *KNEW* THE
THE THINGS YOU DID TO PEOPLE! OH YOU
MONSTROUS MONSTER, THE THINGS YOU
SAID! THE THINGS YOU *DO*!

SORRY...



MR. BENEDICT REACHED FOR A HYPODERMIC...

MR. BENEDICT STABBED MR. BLYTHE IN THE ARM WITH THE NEEDLE. THE OLD MAN CRIED WILDLY TO ALL THE SHEETED FIGURES

YOU! HELP ME!
YOU OUT THERE, UNDER
THE STONES, HELP
ME! LISTEN!



THE OLD MAN FELL BACK. HE KNEW HE WAS DYING...

ALL, LISTEN! HE'S DONE THIS TO ME, AND YOU, AND YOU, ALL OF YOU. HE'S DONE TOO MUCH, TOO LONG. DON'T TAKE IT! DON'T, DON'T LET HIM DO ANY MORE TO ANYONE!



MR. BENEDICT STOOD THERE...

THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO ME, AND NEITHER CAN YOU!

OUT OF YOUR GRAVES. HELP ME! TONIGHT, OR TOMORROW, OR SOON. BUT COME AND FIX HIM... THIS HORRIBLE MAN!



THE OLD MAN RAVED ON AND ON, GETTING WEAKER. THE ROOM WAS SUDDENLY VERY DARK. IT WAS NIGHT. IT WAS GETTING LATE FINALLY, SMILING, THE OLD MAN WHISPERED

THEY'VE TAKEN A LOT FROM YOU, HORRIBLE MAN. TONIGHT, THEY'LL DO SOMETHING



AND THEN THE OLD MAN DIED.

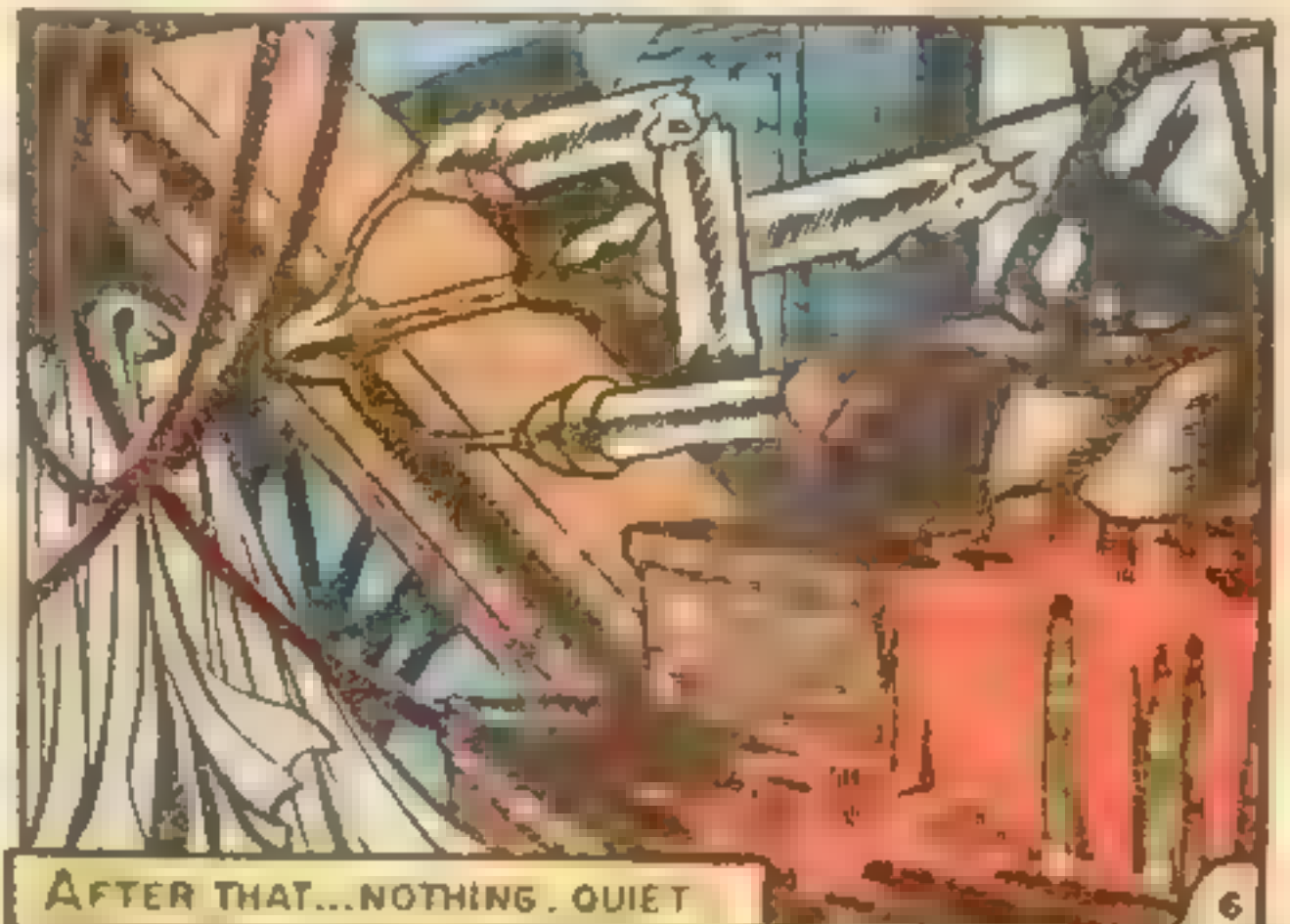
PEOPLE SAY THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION THAT NIGHT IN THE GRAVEYARD. OR RATHER A SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS, A SMELL OF STRANGE THINGS, A MOVEMENT, A VIOLENCE, A RAVING. STONES TOPPLED AND THINGS SWORE OATHS...



... AND THERE WAS A CHASING AND A SCREAMING, AND MANY SHADOWS MOVING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE MORTUARY BUILDING IN SWIFT JERKS AND SHAMBLINGS. WINDOWS BROKE DOORS WERE TORN FROM HINGES, LEAVES FROM TREES IRON GATES CLATTERED...



... AND IN THE END, THERE WAS MR. BENEDICT RUNNING ABOUT, RUNNING ABOUT, VANISHING, AND A TORTURED SCREAM THAT COULD ONLY BE MR. BENEDICT HIMSELF...



AFTER THAT... NOTHING. QUIET

THE TOWN PEOPLE ENTERED THE MORTUARY THE NEXT MORNING. THEY SEARCHED THE MORTUARY BUILDING AND THEN WENT OUT INTO THE GRAVEYARD. AND THEY FOUND NOTHING BUT BLOOD, A VAST QUANTITY OF BLOOD, SPRINKLED AND THROWN AND SPREAD EVERYWHERE YOU COULD POSSIBLY LOOK, AS IF THE HEAVENS HAD BLED PROFUSELY IN THE NIGHT...



WHERE COULD HE BE?

HOW SHOULD WE KNOW?

WALKING THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD, THEY STOOD IN DEEP TREE SHADOWS WHERE STONES, ROW ON ROW, WERE OLD AND TIME-ERASED AND LEANING. NO BIRDS SANG. THEY STOPPED BY ONE TOMBSTONE...



HERE, NOW! LOOK AT THIS...

FRESHLY SCRATCHED, AS IF BY FEEBLY, FRANTIC, NASTY FINGERS IN THE GREYISH, MOSS-FLECKED STONE WAS THE NAME: **MR. BENEDICT...**



GOOD LORD!

LOOK... OVER HERE. THIS ONE TOO... AND THIS ONE... AND THIS ONE...

A VILLAGER POINTED TO THE OTHER GRAVESTONES. UPON EACH AND EVERY STONE, SCRATCHED BY FINGER NAIL SCRATCHINGS, THE SAME MESSAGE APPEARED: **MR. BENEDICT.**



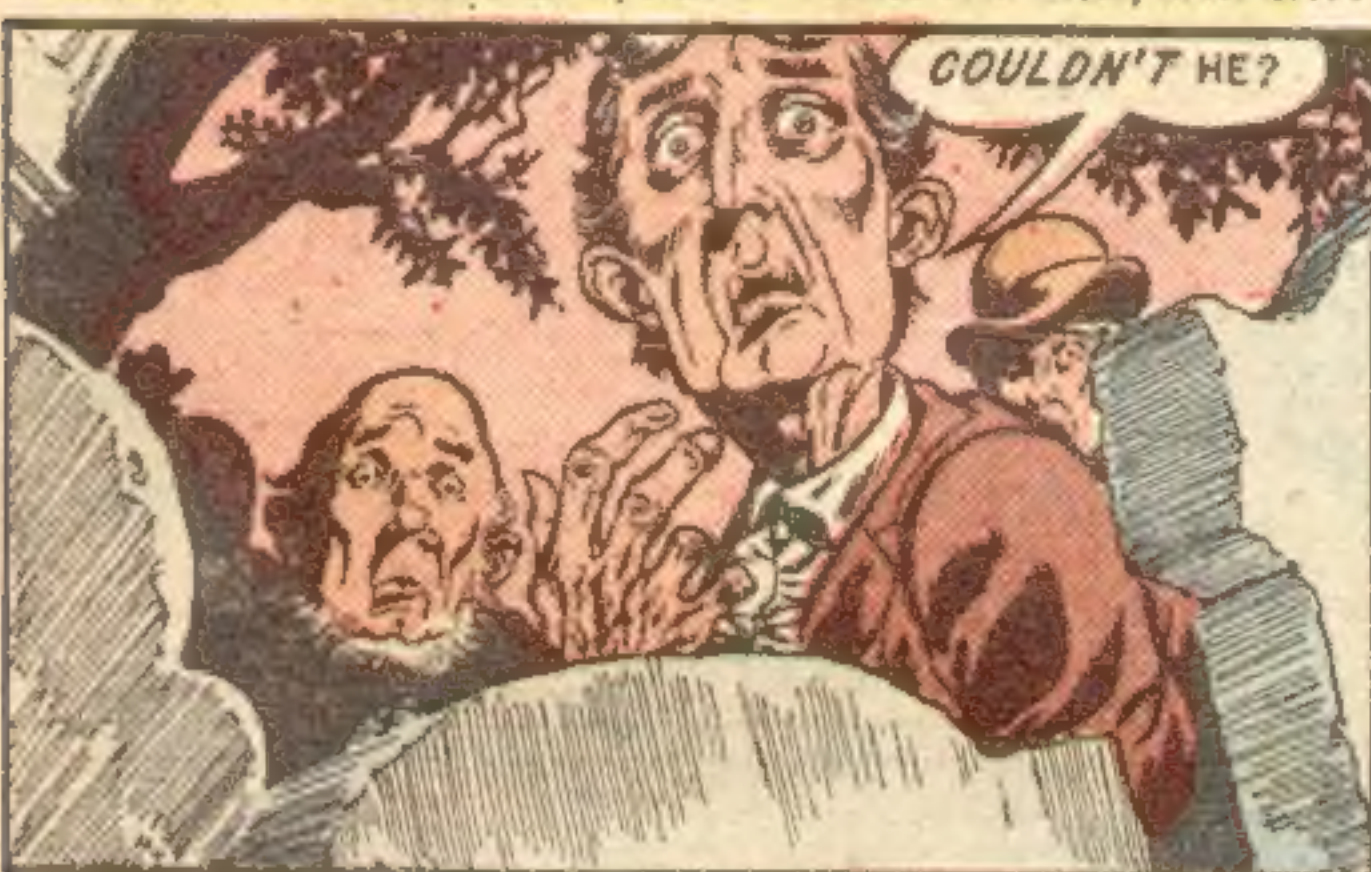
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

THE TOWN PEOPLE WERE STUNNED...

HE... HE **COULDN'T** BE BURIED UNDER **ALL** THESE GRAVESTONES!



THEY STOOD THERE FOR ONE LONG MOMENT. INSTINCTIVELY THEY ALL LOOKED AT ONE ANOTHER NERVOUSLY IN THE SILENCE AND THE TREE DARKNESS. THEY ALL WAITED FOR AN ANSWER. WITH FUMBLING SENSELESS LIPS, ONE OF THEM REPLIED, SIMPLY...



COULDN'T HE?

HEE, HEE! SO, THAT'S THE **DISH, DRIPS**. HOPE YOU FOUND IT A **TASTY TALE**. THIS BOY **BRADBURY** HAS QUITE AN IMAGINATION, WOULDN'T YOU SAY? WELL, THAT ABOUT WINDS UP **THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAG**. I'LL JUST **POUR SOME BLOOD ON THE FIRE**



UNDER MY **GAULDRON**, LAP UP THE **LAST TRACE** OF THIS ISSUE'S **CULINARY CONCOCTION**, AND GET READY FOR MY **NEXT HORROR HELPING**, WHICH WILL BE IN THE **VAULT-KEEPER'S MAG**, THE **VAULT OF HORROR!** 'BYE, NOW!

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No. 424. A wedding set of exquisite beauty. Finished in White or Yellow gold color. Very well made. A real bargain at only

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No. 396. 10 glistering Pseudo Diamonds to resemble diamonds. Compare with wedding ring sets selling for twice as much! She'll love 'em as they sparkle brightly on her hand! Set

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Thrive your friends with these fiery sparklers! Made in Europe by clever craftsmen to resemble costly African Diamonds! Not cheap plastic stones! Pseudo Diamonds are DIFFERENT—Full of fire and brilliancy! Used by some wealthy people to protect their expensive jewels. Now YOU can own a blazing Pseudo Diamond Ring for a few dollars! Choose yours now—enjoy at OUR risk! Mail coupon TODAY.

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No. 401. Something SPECIAL for men! Personalized with your own INITIAL in RAISED GOLD COLOR EFFECT, firmly set in a sparkling Vermilion Pseudo Diamond. Richly flanked with 2 Pseudo Diamonds from Europe. Remember—these are NOT plastic stones. They sparkle with 1000 rays of light. Looks like \$650. Special only

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No. 363. 2 GIANT Pseudo Diamonds—the ring of well-dressed men! Surprise friends and wow the ladies with this triple sparkler. Setting is gleaming Electro Gold Plated. It's a ANKLEBUSTER! Only

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This 15" tall
SILVER TROPHY
JUST AS I DID IN
10 MINUTES
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I GAINED 53 LBS. OF SHAPELY MUSCLES!

Which of these

2 ME'S ?

THAT 112 LB.-6 FT.

SPINDLE-ARMED **SISSY** below
A FEW SHORT WEEKS AGO

THIS MAY BE
YOUR LAST
CHANCE
TO GET FOR
ALL 5 **10c**
PICTURE
PACKED COURSES
MILLIONS HAVE
BEEN SOLD FOR
\$1 AND MORE

When I enrolled I was
a skinny, sick weak-
ling. As you can see
in my "Before" Photo I
looked like a child...
years younger than my
age. I was ashamed to
take a picture in bath-
ing trunks as I do now.
I was shy with girls
because I had nothing
to show off. A few
weeks after starting
the Jowett Course my
body was the best in
the neighborhood. Now
I get respect and ad-
miration from every
fellow and girl I meet.

Roger D. Hirsch
NEW YORK

There's that
skinny scarecrow
ROGER. Let's
pass him by!



ROGER HIRSCH
was a 112 lb. 6 ft. WEAKLING.
Look at him NOW—
A MOVIE-STAR HE-MAN
from Head to Toe

as **YOU**
can be
soon!

YES! You'll see INCH upon INCH of MIGHTY MUSCLE added to
YOUR ARMS. Your CHEST deepened. Your BACK AND
SHOULDERS broadened. From head to heels, you'll gain SOLIDITY,
SIZE, POWER, SPEED! You'll become an ALL-Around, ALL-American
HE-MAN, A WINNER in everything you tackle—or my Training won't
cost you one solitary cent.

Develop YOUR 520 MUSCLES Gain Pounds, INCHES, FAST!

Friend, I've traveled the world. Made a LIFETIME STUDY of every way
known to develop your body. Then I devised the BEST by TEST, my
"5-WAY PROGRESSIVE POWER" the only method that builds you 5-ways
fast. You save YEARS, DOLLARS like movie star Tom Tyler did. Like
champ Roger Hirsch did. Like MANY THOUSANDS like you did. SO Mail
coupon NOW!



Roger
Hirsch
before

NO! friend you
don't have to be
SKINNY any more
just mail **NOW**
the **FREE**
coupon below
as I did. Soon
YOU can add

6 1/2 inches to your **CHEST**
3 inches to each **ARM**
and the rest
in proportion
just as I did.

FREE



GEORGE F. JOWETT
"Champion of
Champions"
4 times Winner
Perfect
Man Contest



Come on, **PAL**, NOW
YOU GIVE ME
10 PLEASANT MINUTES A
DAY IN YOUR HOME... AND I'LL GIVE
YOU a **NEW HE-MAN BODY**
For Your **OLD SKELETON FRAME**.

says *George F. Jowett* World's Greatest
Builder of HE-MEN

NO! I don't care how skinny or flabby you are; if you're
a teen-ager, in your 20's or 30's or over; if you're
short or tall, or what work you do. All I want is JUST
10 EXCITING MINUTES in your home to MAKE YOU OVER
by the SAME METHOD I turned myself from a wreck
to a Champion of Champions.

BOTH FREE FOR QUICK ACTION!

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2. MUSCLE METER

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